



**SHAKESPEARE'S**  
**COMEDY OF ERRORS.**

**BY**

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## INTRODUCTION

### I. LIFE OF SHAKESPEARE.

We have cartloads of literature about every little gilt fopling that dangled in the queen's train in Elizabeth's court : but of the world's greatest poet, genius and dramatic artist, the biographical details are few, meagre, unauthentic and unsatisfactory—overlaid with a cloud of myth, legend and idle gossip and difficult of acceptance and belief.

And yet, as Professor Raleigh has rightly remarked, the broad features of Shakespeare's life are easy to trace. Born in the country and brought up amidst rural pursuits—of parents, who, rich once, had fallen latterly upon evil days—Shakespeare came up to the town to seek his fortune. Perhaps he began by dawdling about in an attorney's office, or perhaps he began by holding horses for gentlemen at the gate of a theatre : in any case—what with play-acting, play-writing and actor-managing—apparently he found what he sought : and then, late in middle life—but not too late—when he had made his pile, he came back to Stratford again and settled down as a thriving and substantial burgher, buying houses, pigs and corn, adding fields upon fields, lending money to the unpeccunious—ay, and not forgetting to sue them with interest and damages. And after spending a few years in the performance of the simple pieties of domestic life, he died at the comparatively early age of 52.

It all sounds easy and simple—simple as a fairy tale and easy to read. And yet, *is* this all? And does it even bring us to the threshold of the great mystery which, in its ceaseless working, turned out Macbeth, Othello and Timon? The purchase of dunghills in Stratford—what could it possibly have to do with the haunting questionings of Hamlet, with Othello's awful passion, with Lear's agonised writhings of soul? Perhaps no amount of detail—however minute or thick-coming they may be—will help to solve these enigmas: yet the human mind has a craving for details. And in the sketch outlined below, we shall give a summary of such of the details about Shakespeare's life as the labours of many generations have succeeded in piling up.

#### BIRTH AND EARLY LIFE IN STRATFORD. (1564—1584.)

The precise date of Shakespeare's birth is unknown: but he was baptised on April 26, 1564 and so must have been born some short time before that, and in any case not later than April 23. His father, John Shakespeare, originally belonged to Snitterfield, a village closely adjoining to Stratford to which latter place he removed some time near 1550. He was a farmer and clothier, slaying the beef and mutton which he himself had raised, whence the tradition that he was a butcher. \*In any case, at the time of Shakespeare's birth, his father was a substantial and well-to-do burgher being actively connected with the town-life of Stratford. Thus he was *Chamberlain* from 1560-62, *Alderman* in 1565 and *High Bailiff* and *Justice of the Peace* (Municipal Chairman and honorary magistrate) in 1568. It is tolerably certain therefore that the poet passed his youth in easy circumstances and must have been entered as a scholar in the local Grammar School of Stratford. But, about 1577, when young William was 13 years of age, John Shakespeare's affairs fell into decline: he became mixed up in law-suits and involved in debts, and failed to attend meetings of the corporation,

\* Shakespeare's mother, Mary Arden, seems to have belonged to a much higher rank of social life, being connected with the Ardens of Parkhall who were of the very first rank among the gentry of Warwickshire.

## INTRODUCTION

and finally his name was removed from the list of aldermen in 1586.

It may be easily conceived that growing financial difficulties prevented John Shakespeare from exercising any close supervision over his son's upbringing. In any case, young William was growing up to be a rather wild and reckless little fellow. Among his other escapades he managed to get into a scrape with a girl much older than himself; and as the lady came to be with child, a marriage had to be hastily patched up between the two—when William was not more than 18 years of age (1582). The girl's name was Anne Hathaway, and perhaps she came from Shottery, one of the hamlets of Stratford. We have no means of knowing whether the marriage was happy or not; but the fact remains that Shakespeare, who was a well-to-do man at the time of his death, left his wife nothing by his testament—save 'the second best bedstead with all its furniture.'

Two years afterwards, the poet became mixed up in a worse escapade still.—He became involved in a poaching expedition upon the estate of a considerable local magnate named Sir Thomas Lucy, and the upshot was that he was compelled to leave Stratford—temporarily at least.

Beyond the two facts mentioned above, and some details about John Shakespeare's worldly circumstances, nothing further is known about his Stratford life. Stratford-on-Avon was in the very heart of rural England, and in spite of its cesspools and dunghills, must have been a pretty place with its enclosed orchards and meadow-lands, its open fields and the Arden forest lying beyond. Shakespeare with his avid poetic imagination must have been drinking up all the beauty and peace of this tranquil country-side and must have made himself familiar with every aspect of its growing and varied beauty. The lore of field sports—of hunting and hawking—came specially kindly to his nature; and references to them are thick-strewn in his works. In fact, this Stratford life was seed-time with our poet: his eyes and ears were open; and he was busy taking toll of the world's life and beauty with his keen and vivid senses.

## LIFE IN LONDON &amp; THE THEATRE AND THE PLAYS.

(1584—1610).

The next eight years in Shakespeare's life are a perfect blank. He disappears from Stratford in 1584 ; he re-appears in London in 1592 ; but we know nothing of the 'in between'. Failing fact, conjecture has been busy, and the result is a very full crop of ingenious surmises. Thus we have been told that during this "vacant inter-lunar swoon", Shakespeare was a soldier, a school-master, an apothecary, a horseboy at the stage-door, and—worst and unkindest cut of all—an attorney's apprentice. But whatever he may or may not have been, there is no denying the fact that in 1592 he was engaged in writing stage-plays or not writing them so much as tinkering and furbishing up old plays in order to make them look like new. This we have from a testimony not to be disputed—viz., the testimony of a foe. The foe was Robert Greene, a scholar and a playwright of repute, who, with others of his kind, was evidently fast being supplanted by our pushful young author. So, Greene, in an abusive pamphlet, *A Groat's worth of wit purchased at a million of Repentance*, gibes at William Shakespeare as "an upstart crow beautified with our feathers who...supposes that he can bombast out a blank verse as the best of you ; and being an absolute *Johannes Factotum* is, in his own conceit, the only *Shake scene* in the country." The final play upon the name (*Shake-scene* and Shakespeare) is absolutely conclusive on the point that the reference is to none other than Shakespeare ; and the reference, slight as it is, is illuminating in many respects. Thus it clearly indicates—

.. (1) that Shakespeare began by tinkering up the works of other authors (as in the 3 parts of Henry VI.) ;

(2) that he was fast growing to be a popular author and was exciting the envy of the older play-wrights ;

(3) that he was a *Johannes factotum*—a Johnny of all works—ready to turn his hand to any kind of honest business that came by the way.

From this time, Shakespeare never had occasion to look back ;

he soon came to be the main stand-by of his company in the matter of writing plays—furnishing them on an average with two plays a year—and it is quite evident that his plays were as much in demand in high court-circles as with the ordinary populace.

But Shakespeare did not depend upon play-writing alone for his subsistence. He was an actor as well—though he never can have risen very high in this respect, seeing that he only played in such minor parts as that of the ghost in *Hamlet*, and Adam in *As You Like It*. And here we may usefully put in a word about the theatrical company with which Shakespeare acted. When we first come upon Shakespeare's traces in London we find that he is acting with the *Lord Chamberlain's Servants*—i. e. the theatrical company which was under the patronage of Henry Carey, first Lord Hunsdon who was Lord Chamberlain at the time. At the death of Lord Hunsdon in 1596, the company passed under the patronage of George, 2nd Lord Hunsdon; and he also became Lord Chamberlain in 1597, the Company continued to be known as the Lord Chamberlain's servants. But in 1603, James took the Company under his own patronage, and henceforth they passed as the 'King's servants'. Throughout his career as actor-dramatist, Shakespeare continued to be attached to the 'Lord Chamberlain's servants' and he was not only a member of the Company, but was also a part-sharer in its profits. The arrangement was something like this. The Company played in some play-house hired for the purpose—at first in the *Theatre* and *Curtain* in Shore-ditch but latterly almost always at the *Globe* in Bankside. The owner of the house got half the profits, while the Company got the other half according to specified shares. It has been calculated by Mr. Sidney Lee that Shakespeare's theatrical income was 600£ per annum; and as the purchasing power of money was eight times what it now is, this would mean that Shakespeare's theatrical income amounted to 5000£ according to present-day standards. In any case, Shakespeare's increasing wealth gladdened the last years of his father's life; it enabled the old man to wipe off his debts and to recover something of his old position in the world. The

poet, it seems, always invested his money in his native town—purchasing houses, lands, tithes and lending out money on interest—so that by 1610, Shakespeare had come to be regarded as one of the most solvent and flourishing citizens of Stratford.

#### LAST DAYS AND DEATH.

Shakespeare never looked upon his actor's life with favour ; and he had always cherished the ambition of spending the last days of his life in his native land—as an *armiger*, and a man of leisure and of means. Prudence and economy enabled him to carry out his desire ; and sometime in 1611, he gave up active connection with the theatre ( though he retained his proprietary interest till death ) and retired to Stratford. Henceforth the record of his life again becomes a blank till we reach the very year of his death. On March 26, 1616, Shakespeare made his last will and testament—a document which seems to have been drafted and executed in haste—and he died a month after, on April 23. According to the memorandum book of the Rev. John Ward ( who became Vicar of Stratford in 1662 ); the poets, Ben Jonson and Michael Drayton, foregathered with our dramatist sometime before his death : and it was in a drinking bout which he had with them that Shakespeare caught the fever of which he died.

The landed property which Shakespeare bequeathed by his 'Will' was calculated to bring in an annual income of 300£ ; and this, together with his theatrical "revenue, gave him an annual income of 1000£—or 8000£ of our day. So, like his own Osric, the poet was at the time of his death "spacious in the possession of dirt".

Of Shakespeare's character there is nothing much to say. Tales are current—such tales *will* always be current—of his wildness in early youth, of the later Bohemianism of his London life and of his amours with this woman and that. But as against this we have Aubrey's testimony that "he was not a company keeper, would not be debauched and was pained if invited to court." In fact, Shakespeare, as Prof. Raleigh has finely said, was a whole man ;

he could view life from all points' and could enjoy and appreciate it all. He was with the libertine as with the Puritan, with the believer as with the sceptic, with the court and with the multitude—in short, a man of infinite variety with a largeness of genius 'liberal and universal like the sun.'"

In the last authentic work of his genius, Shakespeare—half-regretfully and yet with a contented acceptance of Fate—observes that the 'cloud-capt towers, gorgeous palaces and solemn temples,' which he had called up with his "so mighty genius" should "melt into air, thin air" and "leave not rack behind." Three centuries have passed away since then—yea, full three centuries and more : and round us, before our very eyes, thrones, dynasties and empires have crumbled into dust and nothingness. And yet the "cloud-capt towers, gorgeous palaces and solemn temples" of Shakespeare's genius endure and seem likely to endure for ever. Even so ; for their foundation is upon truth.

"Deep in the general heart of man their power survives."

## II. SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS.

### 1. Grouping of the Plays and their Chronological List.

There is reason to believe that the growth of Shakespeare's art is an accurate reflex of the growth of Shakespeare's mind, and the parallelism has been very thoroughly worked out by Mr. Dowden among others. Without going into the matter in much detail, it may be sufficient to notice that there are three broad phases of development through which Shakespeare's genius seems to have passed : and these successive phases of development can be very clearly traced in the different types of play which we have received from his hands.

Thus we have the works of his early period—plays in which Shakespeare is still seen as an amateur and apprentice—a novice, not simply in the manipulation of his art but also in his knowledge and appreciation of human character. In these early plays, Shakespeare is very careful in the construction of his plots, is not wholly



unmindful of the mechanical rules of the unities, and is intent upon the display of verbal wit and cleverness. It cannot be said that they are wholly deficient in knowledge of human character : but Shakespeare's knowledge of human character is still only superficial—and his pre-occupation is more with his own wit and fancy than with the hard and naked realities of the world. Typical specimens of Shakespeare's work in this period would be the comedies like the *Comedy of Errors*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, and *Two Gentlemen of Verona*.

Then we have the plays of his *middle period*—mainly *history* and *comedy* with an occasional tragedy thrown in, more by way of a makeweight than because Shakespeare had yet awoke to a sense of the tragic realities of the world. In these works we find that Shakespeare's art has gained greatly in ripeness and maturity : his blank verse is less staccato and mechanical ; his characters are marshalled and contrasted with more skill, and his grip upon the central current of his story is more firm and assured ; but he is still far from being alive to the deeper and more tragic issues of the life and passions of humanity. As yet, the world to him was a gay and glittering masquerade, scintillating with life, colour and brilliance : but as for the dark and fearsome chasms that yawned beneath this "thin and brilliant superficies—as for the gaunt and ghastly skeletons that grinned so ominously behind this dainty masquerade—Shakespeare's sense even yet was blind to them.

It fact, awakening came late in Shakespeare's life : but when it came, it was blinding in its splendour, sweeping in its scope, abyssal in its reach and depth. We do not know how precisely it happened—the unfaith of a mistress, the treachery of a friend or the death of some one deeply beloved : but somewhere, near forty years of age, the world turned sour and bitter to our poet. The golden haze which had rested hitherto upon the world's fair face and made it look like some fairy habitation of joy and unending delight—it was torn and pierced as with a shaft of cruel and pitiless light and revealed to the poet's seared eye-balls those abyssal depths where the naked passions of humanity roll, writhe and fester

as in some hideous Walpurgis-dance of wild and unbridled revelry. This was Shakespeare's great period—a period when he had reached the full stature of his manhood, when Life 'had no mysteries to hide from him, when he *saw* as in some trance of apocalyptic vision, and his pen, guided by the magic hand of chance, but set down in choking half-whispers the things that he saw. But this period—great for the dramatist, fruitful for the world—must have been terrible for the man : for it is terrible to gaze wide-eyed upon the naked face of the truth, it is terrible to stoop over the narrow rock-shelf at the edge of the world and peer into the seething witches' cauldron below : and yet this is what had happened to Shakespeare. The flimsy card's house that the world had laboriously built up during many generations for our delusion—trust in Providence, faith in man, love and reverence for woman—those cherished deceptions that keep us in love with life—all this had been swept away from Shakespeare as by a furnace-blast from Hell, and he had been flung, shivering and cold, into a dark and formless void of doubt, despair and utter unbelief. And it is the outcome of Shakespeare's grim wrestling in the dark with these phantom forms of doubt and disbelief that we get *Othello*, *Lear* and *Timon*.

To a man less strong of heart and brain, less warm-blooded at the core, the experience would have been killing. Even Shakespeare's soul was scorched and withered under the hot blast of his fearsome experience : but he recovered : he recovered and crossed back to the world of sanity—this 'little world' of small joys, small risks and tepid pleasures, where the wind is tempered to the shorn lamb and where the truth is veiled under the 'filmy gauze of blissful fiction. The three romances of Shakespeare's later life—*Pericles*, *Tempest* and *Cymbeline*—romances written, one may presume, amid the peace and tranquillity of Stratford—are an authentic witness to this period of reconqulement and rest.

Roughly speaking, then, the plays of Shakespeare may be classified as belonging to his early, middle or later period. But another method of classification is also available to us, and the two may be combined with much usefulness. In the first collected

edition of Shakespeare's works (the *First folio* as it is called) the plays were divided among *Comedies*, *Tragedies* and *Histories* : and though Shakespeare's *Comedy* and *Tragedy* have a tendency to merge in one another—for all practical purposes, this classification still holds good.

Combining the two above principles of classification, we have Shakespeare's *Comedies* of early, middle and later periods ; his *Histories* of the same three periods ; his *Tragedies*, also of the same three periods, and lastly the *Romance* plays—belonging quite to the concluding stage of Shakespeare's life : and in the list given below, this is the plan according to which the plays have been sought to be arranged.

#### FIRST PERIOD (1591—95) ;

1. Histories—*Henry VI*, Parts 1, 2 and 3 (91-92) ;  
*Richard II*, (1593) ;  
*King John* (1595).
2. Comedies—*The Comedy of Errors* (1593) ;  
*Timing of the Shrew*, (1594) ;  
*Love's Labour Lost* (94) ;  
*Two Gentlemen of Verona* (95) ;  
*A Midsummer Night's Dream* (95).
3. Tragedies—*Titus Andronicus* (1594) ;  
*Romeo and Juliet* (95).

#### MIDDLE PERIOD. (1596-1602).

1. Histories—*Richard II*. (96) ; *I Henry IV*. (97) ;  
2 *Henry IV*. (98) ; *Henry V*. (99).
2. Comedies—*Merchant of Venice* (96) ; *Much Ado* (1598) ;  
*Merry Wives* (1600) ; *As You Like It* (1600) ;  
*Twelfth Night* (1601) ; *All's Well* (1602).
3. Tragedies—*Julius Cæsar* (99) ; *Hamlet* (1601) ;  
*Troilus and Cressida* (1602).

## LATER PERIOD. (1604—1607).

N. B. It is to be noticed that in this third period, there is no *story* and only one *Comedy*—and that *Comedy* also is a Tragedy all but name.

1. Comedy—*Measure for Measure* (1604).

2. Tragedies—*Othello* (1604) ; *Macbeth* (1605) ; *Leur* (1605) ; *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Coriolanus* (1605) ; *Timon of Athens* (1607).

## THE ROMANCES.

*Cymbeline* (1609) ; *The Winter's Tale* (1610) ; *The Tempest* (1611).

N.B. It may be taken for certain—as certain as anything, about Shakespeare's life or chronology can be—that Shakespeare intended *The Tempest* to be his farewell performance—the last night of his appearance upon the world's stage : for here, in the guise of Prospero, he buries his magic book, breaks his magic wand, and bids farewell to the fairy creatures of his genius. But even after the writing of *Tempest*, he seems to have co-operated in the composition of two other plays—*Henry VIII*, and the *Two Noble Kinsmen*—in each case with Fletcher.

## 2. Some aspects of Shakespeare's Dramatic Art.

To understand Shakespeare's genius—not adequately ( for that is one can do ) but with some approach to rightness—you must go to the fountain-head, to Shakespeare himself. Begin with the great tragedies ; work back to the earlier, cruder and more immature productions of his youth ; and then work right round to the great tragedies again—for they are the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first word and the last in literary truth and power in poetic sumptuousness and in blinding insight into Life's dark mysteries.—Criticism will help you but little—specially criticism with the *Comedy of Errors* for text and illustration. Still, a few broad and general observations may be attempted.

Note in the first place that Shakespeare never cares for the story. Any story is good enough for him, provided it will lead him to a situation—a situation where he can do what he

1. Shakespeare's indifference to the story. likes best, where he can throw the line-light of his searching genius upon the 'red-ripe of the human heart.'—There must be two elements in

every drama—*character*, and the *story* which will illustrate or help to develope that character. Of these, Shakespeare's supremest concern is with character and his supremest unconcern seems to be with the story. Unlike other authors, he never takes pains with the invention of his story: he never claims—never pretends to claim—any originality in the matter. He picks up his stories from the road-side so to say, and is liberal and universal in the matter of his borrowings. Plutarch's *Lives*, Holinshed's *Chronicles*, Cinthio's *Hecatommithi*, Giovanni Fiorentino's *Il Peccone*—the whole world, of Renaissance literature was ready and available to him; and he takes his toll of them with impartial generosity. Sometimes (as in *Macbeth* or *Othello*) the story is good and suitable, easily malleable to dramatic art and swiftly leading on to that clash and interplay of jarring passions in which was Shakespeare's chief delight: sometimes again (as in *Cymbeline* or in *Much Ado About Nothing*) the story is hopelessly cranky and lop-sided, jumbled in structure or with some incurable vice in its original disposition of characters. But in either case, Shakespeare cheerfully burdens himself with his subject, seldom pausing even to prune away a patent and manifest absurdity and never desisting till he has gathered from his labours some fruit of immortal relish for the soul.

Again, just as Shakespeare never cares for his story, so he never cares for the architectonics of plot-construction. His plots are often

2. Shakespeare's indifference to plot-construction. jumbled and ill-put up things; sometimes, there is no definite centre of interest anywhere—nothing in the nature of a climax or crisis, and sometimes the story drags on even when the chief interest in it has been exhausted and has vanished.

Take *Merchant of Venice* ; our interest disappears with the great trial scene , and yet the play lingers on because Shakespeare has some loose ends of his story lying about which he must tie up before having done with it. Take *Henry V.* the interest, such as it is, evaporates with the battle of Agincourt ; and yet "the story drags on for the weary length of two scenes more—scenes of which the dramatic relevancy is questionable and the taste worse than questionable and which yet are retained because Shakespeare had found them in his original or perhaps because the play had to be stuffed out to the requisite length of five Acts.

No doubt, there are striking and notable exceptions. In the great tragedies, where Shakespeare's imagination is working at a white heat as in *Macbeth* or *Othello* (notably *Othello*), the fusion of story and character is complete. The character just fills the story, and the story is a fit vehicle for the character. But elsewhere the disproportion between the two is very noticeable.

It has been said above that Shakespeare's supremest concern is about character and that he cares little about other things. But

even here a reservation must be made : for it will be noticed that Shakespeare cares nothing for what has been called development of character. Unlike the so-called 'Psychological' authors, Shakespeare never stops to analyse or pick asunder the different strands of influence or emotion which operate upon his *dramatis personæ* and help to build up their character. In fact, we seldom get in his plays the previous life-history of his characters : rather, that previous life-history (with all the contributory influences which helped to mould it into shape) is taken for granted : and Shakespeare's only concern is to hurry them on into some intense and vital situation where, under the stress and impact of contending passions, their humanity blazes out in all sorts of strange and fantastic shapes. Thus we know nothing of how Romeo or Lear or Macbeth came to be what they are ; only, when we first meet them in the play, Romeo is already seen to be love-bewildered and love-intoxicated ; Lear is already seen to be passionate, self-willed and keenly sensitive on the score of affection ; Macbeth is already

prone to dwell too much on the 'top and golden round of sovereignty.' The genesis of these passions is not explained ; it is with their clash, interplay and resulting consequences that Shakespeare busies himself.

But if Shakespeare does not care about the story, plot or even development of character—wherein, it may be asked, lies the secret of his profound and universal genius ? The answer is simple and lies within small compass. It lies in the first place in his amazing insight into character. Once he has brought

4. Shakespeare's  
profound insight  
into character.

his characters into focus, once he has got a grip over the situation, nothing seems to be

hidden from those wonder-seeing, wonder-working eyes of his. The dark veil which spreads over the face of things and hides the deep workings of the human heart from our gaze seems to be rent asunder before this man's keen and searching vision ; he takes us to the shrine's inner sanctuary ; and we feel like God's spies as we traverse in his company the dark, uncharted spaces of the universe.

We do not touch in this place upon Shakespeare's bland and wise humanity ; the keen and infectious gaiety of his early youth or the serene, deep-chested mirth of his later years ; the shrewd, piercing

intensity of his passion or the sumptuous, full-

5. The amazing  
vitality of Shakespeare's  
characters.

blooded splendour of his rhetoric : but side by side with his amazing insight into human

nature, we must notice one other secret of his marvellous genius—and that is the amazing fund of vitality with which he endows his characters. No doubt there are characters in Shakespeare's plays in whom he does not take the slightest interest—to whom he allots a few poor, meagre, perfunctory speeches—and then dismisses them as it were with a contemptuous wave of the hand, bundling them off the stage in the most unceremonious manner possible. But once Shakespeare's sympathies have been aroused, he never allows us to forget the fact ; such a character bears thenceforth the authentic hall-mark of his genius—and the accents of his speech are the accents

of truth. Of the characters who thus enlist Shakespeare's sympathies and call forth the creative power of his genius, we forget that they are figments of imagination, puppets of the poet's fancy and brain. They fall into stride beside us in the comfortable path-ways of the world : their shadows haunt us for ever, and will not let us be: they become the companions for our joys and sorrows, the object of our hopes and affections, the centre of our aspirations and passions, yea, they become a part of our inmost being.

But note one curious point about some of these characters. There is no knowing as to *when* Shakespeare will arouse himself or *who* will strike the hot anvil of his fancy. The persons who thus come in for a share in the largess of his genius may, outwardly speaking, be of no importance at all : their place in the main action of the drama may be comparatively insignificant : but Shakespeare cares little for such considerations. Take *Fluellen* for instance. A common Welsh captain in the king's forces, like so many other officers in the army—in the main story of the drama, Fluellen's place is of no importance whatever : and yet, under the magic of Shakespeare's hand, he leaps into sudden and dominant vitality : in fact, next after Henry, he is the one character who absorbs the largest share of our attention, and so far as skill of execution is concerned his portrait is better finished than even that of the king. Osric in *Hamlet* and Barnardine in *Measure for Measure* would be similar instances in point. Their place in the plot, their connection with the story of the drama, is insignificant ; and yet they are marvellously alive, and buoyant in the alertness of their vitality. But of course the most notable instance of all is the case of Falstaff. Falstaff is supposed to be the boon companion of Prince Henry—a humble pensioner of his favour. But once he has been called into existence, he begins to dominate the play ; and the poor Prince who is intended to be the central figure of the story—even in *Henry IV*—is overshadowed by him to such an extent that, in the end, and in order to preserve the prince's individuality, Shakespeare has to get rid of the fat knight altogether. So he is first disgraced and afterwards killed—much to the advantage of the graceless Prince



Henry but to the permanent impoverishment of the world's stock of innocent delight.

### 3. *Shakespeare's Comedies.*

It may be said that Tragedy is one, and that its perpetual theme is man's endless strife—and endless failure in the strife—with destiny and character.

But if Tragedy is one, Comedy is manifold. It ranges over an extensive field, breaks out in all manner of fantastic forms and in all its myriad varieties, hold the field perhaps even more securely than Tragedy : for nothing but supreme genius succeeds with Tragedy, while Comedy—even with less skill in conception and less deftness in manipulation—can be made pleasing and agreeable, though it may fail of being great. Among the recognized varieties of the *Comedy* we may note :—

1. The *comedy of intrigue*, where the interest depends upon the skilful evolution of a plot, which, however fantastic or improbable it may be in its origin, may yet be handled with such dexterity and skill as to abound with a variety of comic situations and give room for a large body of playful dialogue.
2. The *Romantic comedy*, where we are removed to an ideal world of fancy and romance—in which, freed from the cramping restraints of reality, the soul is steeped in an atmosphere of lyrical beauty and joy.
3. The *comedy of humour* in which the mirror is held up to Nature, and the Dramatist—through a faithful representation of contemporary life and manner—brings us in contact with the fundamental realities of human life.

Perhaps it is this last species of comedy which is the most popular form of dramatic composition, and which—from Aristophanes and Plautus (among the ancients) to Moliere (in the 17th. century) and to Ibsen and Bernard Shaw in the present day—has counted a

large number of eminent men among its practitioners. But somehow or other, Shakespeare never tried his hand at this kind of comedy-writing, and his plays, though coloured and saturated by reminiscence of the life of his own time, give us no consubstantial or avowed picture of that age. Shakespeare's comedies (except in the case of *All's well that ends well* and *Measure for Measure* which trench upon the borderland of Tragedy) are either comedies of intrigue or comedies of romance. The present play, *Two gentlemen of Verona* and (in a lesser degree) *The Merchant of Venice* are types of the former while *As you like it* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* are typical and immortal specimens of the latter.

In the remarks that follow, we shall confine ourselves exclusively to Shakespeare's comedies of intrigue.

Speaking quite generally it may be said that, in these plays Shakespeare cares nothing for the character and cares everything for the plot. 'Development the character under the impact of passion and circumstance' which is the standing theme of the Tragedies is conspicuously by its absence in these comedies. This is not to say that the characters are dull or wooden; on the other hand, they sparkle with life and vitality; but beyond speech and gesture, Shakespeare tells us nothing about them. Things happen to them; and they pass through a succession of intrigues and adventures; but nothing happens in the inner history of their character.

Disregard of  
characterisation.

We have said above that, in these plays, Shakespeare cares much for the plot and nothing for the character. But even this remark

Disregard of  
probability and  
verisimilitude.

about plot must be taken with qualification, for Shakespeare cares nothing about the probability or verisimilitude of his story. In fact, the postulates with which he starts are often startling and improbable—as for instance, two pairs of twins, of whom each pair is so exactly alike in form and feature as to be mistaken one for the other. But once you overlook this initial improbability of plot, there is nothing but praise for the masterly skill with which the rest of the story is evolved.

But perhaps the most remarkable feature of these early comedies is the note of dominant and irrepressible vitality that breathes through them. Shakespeare's life, at this stage was seemingly one of unclouded gaiety, happiness and joy ; the glamour and fascination of youth was upon him and so was the glamour of London with its teeming and many-coloured life and its constant succession of gay and joyous adventures. And the atmosphere of all this startling beauty and joy is called up by the poet with unspeakable freshness and verve in these comedies of his.

One outer sign of Shakespeare's unclouded gaiety of heart at this period is in the trill of lyric melody which breaks out ever and anon in these comedies. Contact with the dark realities of the world gradually froze up the lyric current in the poet's mind : but at yet the current sparkled and rippled gaily in his heart, and it breaks out in those exquisite strains of rapture of which the early comedies (notably, *As you like it* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*) are so full.

### III. COMEDY OF ERRORS.

#### 1. ' Date of composition and publication.

**Publication :** So far as publication is concerned, the date is easily ascertained. Unlike as in the case of most of Shakespeare's plays, we are not bothered here with any question of *quarto* or *folio* : in fact, the play never seems to have been printed in Shakespeare's life-time : and it was first printed and published in the First Folio\* (1623) where it stands fifth in the "catalogue of comedies, histories and tragedies" and where it occupies pp. 85 to 100.

\*The *First Folio* was the first collected edition of Shakespeare's plays which was published in 1623 under the supervision of the poet's colleagues, Hemynge and Condell. The Quartos, on the other hand, were pirated.

**Composition :** So far as composition is concerned, the date

can be only approximately fixed and admits of a wide latitude of conjecture. The play may have been written at any time between 1589 and 1598: considering the style, language and degree of dramatic skill exhibited, it is much more likely to have been written towards the earlier than the later date; and there is a double strand of evidence which seems to point to the year 1591-92 as the precise year of composition.

Let us see how the thing works out:

- (1) Francis Meres in his *Polladis Tania* (Wit's Treasure),<sup>4</sup> a book which we know was written in June, 1598 and published in September, 1598 mentions this play as among the comedies of Shakespeare.) So it must have been in existence before 1598.
- (2) Again, there is a mention of *Comedy of Errors* in a book called *Gesta Grayorum or the History of Henry, Prince of Purpoole*. This 'Henry, Prince of Purpoole' was a gentleman of Norfolk who was Lord of Misrule (something like the president of festivities) at Gray's Inn during the revels of 1594; and the book tells us how on the 28th of December of this year (during the continuance of the revels), the players came from Shoredich to entertain the guests; how the noise and confusion was so great that the actors had to retire at first; how the confusion abated afterwards and the players returned

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editions, published in Shakespeare's life-time, of the acting versions of his plays. Their literary value, therefore, is very questionable.

The names, *folio* and *quarto*, are derived from the size of the printed sheet and consequently of the resulting volume. Where the sheet is folded once (giving two leaves and four pages) we have the *folio*, and where the sheet is folded twice (giving four leaves and eight pages) we have the *quarto*.

\* The reference by Meres would deserve to be quoted in full. It should be mentioned also that Meres gives the true title of the book, viz. "Errors" simply and not *Comedy of Errors*.

to give a performance of "A Comedy of Errors (like to Plautus his *Menechmus*)". The description of the play leaves no reasonable room for doubt that this was Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors*, and the players were the Lord Chamberlain's servants—of whom Shakespeare was one.

Thus, external evidence\* makes it certain that the play was in existence before 1598, and probable that it was in existence before 1594. And the matter is further clinched by internal evidence.

Thus in the play—in III, 2.—where Dromio is describing the fat kitchen-wench whose body was like a globe so that countries could be traced in her—Antipholus asks "where France?" (meaning "whereabouts in her body would you find France?") To this Dromio answers "In her forehead, armed and reverted making war against her *heir*". Now, in 1589, Henry III of France acknowledged Henry of Navarre as his *heir*; but a large part of the country was not disposed to accept this nomination, and Henry had to struggle hard for his sovereignty which he finally gained in 1593. Thus, between 1589 and 1593, France might be described as waging war against her "*heir*"; and so the play must have been written between 1589 and 1593.

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\* The evidence available for determining the date of Shakespeare's plays falls among two classes—(i) internal evidence, and (ii) external evidence.

We get external evidence—

- (1) Where the play has been entered in the register of copyrights kept by the Stationers' Company—thus giving the date of its publication;
- (2) Or where there are references to the play in a contemporary book of ascertained date as Meres' *Palladis Tamia*; or where there is any reference to the play in the diary or correspondence of any contemporary person (as for instance, the diary of Dr. Simon Forman which helps us to fix the date of *Macbeth*, or the diary of Mr. John Manningham, a barrister, which helps us in *Twelfth Night*.)

We have internal evidence—

- (1) Where there is reference in the play itself to some contemporary incident of which the date is known to us
- (2) also in the language, style and versification of the play.

But this is not all. In 1591, Elizabeth<sup>1</sup> sent an expedition to the assistance of Henry of Navarre under the command of Essex and Sir John Norris. Now, it seems reasonable that the above reference in Shakespeare was prompted by this contemporary incident, in which case the play must have been written in 1591.

- (4) Again, in the same act, same scene, there is a reference to Spain sending whole "armadoes of caracks" to the West Indies. Now, the expedition of the Great Armada against England took place in 1588; and there is no reference to any earlier use of this word before that date. This also points to a date after 1589 and as near that year as possible.

From these concurrent strands of testimony, it seems reasonable to conclude that the play was written between 1589 and 1593; and that most probably it was written in 1591.

## 2. Sources of the play.

For his story and the dramatic management of the story, Shakespeare was mainly indebted to the following sources:

- (1) The chief and capital source of the plot is to be found in the *Mænachmi* of Plautus—a comedy where also the story turns upon the strange resemblance between a pair of twins and of the errors that spring from this resemblance.

But it is a moot point as to whether Shakespeare got his material from the *Manachmi* in the original or from an English rendering of the drama. From various considerations bearing upon the extent of Shakespeare's Latinity, it seems fairly deducible that Shakespeare did *not* consult the original but was indebted either to a translation of Plautus or to a play founded upon Plautus. Now, what were these latter sources?

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\* For a sketch of Plautus's comedy and Shakespeare's divergence from it, see Appendix to Introduction.

(a) In the first place, as early as 1576, there was a play called 'The Historic of Error'—a performance of which was given at Hampton Court by the children of St. Paul's on New Years' Day. In 1582, the same play was again performed at Windsor: and it has been conjectured that this play was nothing but a free rendering of the *Manachmi*.

(b) Also, in 1595, there was published a prose translation of the *Manachmi* by one Mr. "W, W"—William Warner, an attorney of the Common Pleas. Now this translation, though published in 1595, was entered in the Stationers' Register as early as 1584 and must have been in existence (in MS.) even before that time.

It may be concluded from this that Shakespeare was indebted for his story to either of the above books. And Mr. Henry Cunningham (editor of the 'Arden' Shakespeare) fairly contends from a number of parallel expressions between Shakespeare's Comedy and W. W's translation of the *Manachmi* that it was this translation which the author had before him in writing the *Comedy of Errors*.

2) For one particular incident of the play—viz. that of Antipholus E. being shut out from his house while Antipholus S. is dining within, Shakespeare was possibly indebted to another comedy of Plautus, viz. his *Amphytrion* (where Jupiter and Mercury are dining in the house while the husband waits outside).

(2) But if Shakespeare was indebted to Plautus for the outlines of his story, for the general character of the comedy—for that air of fantastic unreality which belongs to it and which characterizes all his earlier writings—he must have been indebted to Lyly. \*

\*\* But if Shakespeare resembled Lyly in the unreal and fairy-like atmosphere which he postulates for his comedies, he differed from Lyly in two important particulars:

(1) In Lyly, the action is languid and is subordinated to the wit and whim of the dialogue. This is not so in Shakespeare. certainly not in

He was indebted also to Lyly for the "introduction of the double or under-plot—"in which some well-marked character not absolutely necessary to the development of the main plot is brought on the stage to amuse the audience with his oddities and witty abuse of language."

### 8. Sketch of the Story.

In one sense the story of the *Comedy of Errors* is very simple and can be easily sketched.

In the first scene, in the account put in the mouth of the merchant Aegeon, the author gives us the setting or framework of his story—how the merchant had a pair of twin-children so exactly alike in form, feature and countenance that they could only be distinguished by their names; how these twin-brothers had for their respective servants another pair of twins born on the same day and at the same place and also exactly similar in form, feature and countenance; and how by successive misfortunes the whole family had become separated from one another.

No doubt, the account is extravagantly improbable; but leaving that point out of consideration for the present, it suggests to us the possibility of an infinite amount of error and confusion. So, in the succeeding scenes (from 1. 2 to IV. 2) we get an account of the various errors that arise from a confusion of identity between the two Antipholuses and the two Dromios.

In the summary appended below, we shall first give an outline of the poet's framework—how he marshals the different characters on the same stage and thus makes the errors possible, and then we shall sketch the action of the story scene by scene and act by act.

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the *Comedy of Errors* where the action is unusually brisk—except in one or two passages where the story is hung up while Dromio S. pursues his extravagant witticisms.

- (2) Lyly works out his *denouement* by the orthodox intervention of the *deus ex machina* while in Shakespeare the conclusion is worked out by the employment of natural and legitimate means.



## A. THE FRAMEWORK.

There was, once upon a time, a very bitter quarrel between the two states of Syracuse and Ephesus, and it was one of the laws of Ephesus that if any native of Syracuse was found there, all his property would be confiscated and he would be sentenced to death unless he could redeem his life by the payment of 1000 marks. It so chanced that a merchant of Syracuse named Aegeon, who was quite ignorant of this law, once happened to visit Ephesus; and of course the law was put in force against him. Aegeon had no money wherewith to pay the fine and therefore he was at once sentenced to death. But before the sentence could be carried out, the Duke wanted him to relate the story of his life. The story was a peculiarly sad and unfortunate one. Aegeon, it appeared, had once upon a time gone to Epidamnum. His wife joined him there and gave birth to a pair of twins so alike in face and figure as to be hardly distinguishable one from the other. Their two sons were both named Antipholus and they had a pair of slaves to attend upon them, named Dromio, who also were twins and were as like one another as two peas. After a time, Aegeon started homewards from Epidamnum, but was shipwrecked not far from the coast. The lives of Aegeon, his wife, and his children were saved but the family were wholly separated. The merchant, the younger Antipholus,\* and the younger Dromio were picked up by a ship and landed at Syracuse; but what became of the elder Antipholus, his mother, and the elder Dromio could not be ascertained. All this had happened about 25 years ago. In the meantime, seven years before the date of the commencement of this story, the younger Antipholus had obtained permission from his father to go out in search of his elder brother. But from this time all trace of this young man also had been lost. Thus at the present moment the merchant was without the company either of his wife or of his children. He had grown sick of life and longed only to die.

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\* There is some confusion on this point, for which see *paraphrase and notes*.

The Duke was much moved by the story of Aegeon and allowed him a day of grace to find out if, by some means or other, he could not secure money enough to pay the fine. This seemed very unlikely, for Aegeon knew not a single soul at Ephesus : and it did not seem probable that anybody would advance money to a stranger.

But in the meantime a very great surprise was preparing for Aegeon, for, curiously enough, his wife and his two children were all at this time at Ephesus, though of course none of them knew that the others were there. How this strange thing had come to pass, we shall now proceed to tell.

We have seen that Aegeon and his family were all separated in a ship-wreck off the coast of Epidamnium. The elder Antipholus and the elder Dromio were picked up by some fishermen and taken to Ephesus and there sold to Duke Menaphon, uncle to the Duke of Ephesus. This elder Antipholus afterwards caught the fancy of the ~~Duke~~ who made him a captain in the army and continued to show a good deal of favour to him. This accounts for the presence of one of the sons of Aegeon in the city.

We have seen also that ~~seven~~ years ago the younger Antipholus obtained his father's permission to go out in search of his elder brother. Now it so happened that on the day of his father's arrival at Ephesus, this young man also had arrived at the same city. Only, having a friend in the city who knew of the cruel state of the law, he gave himself out as a merchant from Epidamnium. This accounts for the presence of the younger Antipholus and the younger Dromio in the city.

But the merchant's wife also was in Ephesus. The fishermen who had picked up the elder Antipholus, had picked up his mother also in their boat. But they afterwards sold Antipholus as mentioned above, while his mother entered a nunnery of Edhesus, where she gradually rose to be Lady Abbess.

Thus Aegeon's wife, children and the servants of the latter were all at Ephesus on the day of his arrival there, though he knew it not. And the present story deals with the endless confusion which arises from the fact that the two Antipholuses, of Ephesus

and Syracuse, were exactly alike in face and figure, as also were their servants, the two Dromios. The people of Ephesus mistake Antipholus the younger for his elder brother; and even the wife of the latter makes the same mistake. These mistakes at first produce a certain amount of trouble; but when the parties are all confronted with one another, the whole mystery is explained and everything ends happily and joyously.

## B. THE ERRORS.

### ACT I.

**Scene 1.** It is morning\* the merchant Aegeon is sentenced to death: he gives an account of his hapless past, and is allowed a day's respite to see if he can't find out some friend or benefactor.

**Scene 2.** It is still morning—about 12 o'clock. Antipholus S. (the younger or wandering Antipholus) has just landed in the town. He is warned by a merchant (with whom he has had business correspondence before) not to give out that he comes from Syracuse. The merchant then repays him the money which Antipholus had previously entrusted to his care. Antipholus gives this money to his servant Dromio, as's him to take it to the inn (Centaur) where they are putting up, and bids him stay there—promising that he would return there in an hour. The merchant also leaves—Antipholus S. saying that he will walk about the town viewing the manners etc.

Meanwhile, Dromio E. who is the servant of Antipholus E. (the citizen or elder Antipholus) has been asked by his mistress to find out his master and bring him home for dinner. He comes upon Antipholus S. walking about in the mart, naturally takes him for his own master, gives him the mistress's invitation to dinner and gets well-beaten for his pains, and thus initiates the chapter of

\* It will be seen that the whole action of the drama is comprised within the course of one day—beginning in the Duke's court in the morning and ending before the Priory at 5 o'clock in the evening.

errors. Meanwhile, after Dromio E. has left Antipholus S. (who takes him for his own servant Dromio S) the latter grows afraid lest the servant should have lost the money entrusted to him, and so starts for the inn to enquire about it.

## ACT II.

**Scene 1.** It is now two o'clock—the hour of dinner being past, Adriana (wife of Antipholus E, who is by way of being a very jealous woman) and her sister, Luciana, are waiting impatiently for Antipholus to come home; and Adriana has some very hard things to say about the infidelity of her husband. To them enters Dromio E. who perturbs them still further by his account of Antipholus's strange behaviour. They resolve to find him out and see things for themselves.

**Scene 2.** It is still a little after 2 o'clock. Antipholus S. has ascertained at the inn that his money is safe and that his servant has gone in search of him. He then goes abroad again, and we find him at a 'public place' where master and man come upon each other. Antipholus S. naturally taxes Dromio S. with his former strange behaviour as he conceives it to be, viz. about the invitation to dinner. Dromio S. as naturally, denies the matter altogether and gets beaten for his pains; and then there occurs some excellent fooling between the two.

To them enter the enraged Adriana and Luciana, her sister. After some recriminations, Adriana (who takes Antipholus S. for her husband) again presses him to come to dinner. Antipholus is naturally bewildered, but at last thanks it the better part to fall in with the woman's humour and thus avoid further trouble.

So they return home together, and Adriana leaves strict orders that the door is to be shut and nobody allowed to enter while they are at dinner—thus giving rise to a fresh train of errors.

## ACT III.

**Scene 1.** While Adriana and Luciana are dining upstairs with Antipholus S. the real Simon Pure (Antipholus E. the master of the

house, arrives outside. He is accompanied by a goldsmith (Angelo) whom he has ordered to make a neck-chain for his wife and a merchant, Balthazar, whom he has invited to dinner. To his exasperation, he finds the door shut in his face; and he is further enraged by the abuse which the people within pour upon him, thinking that it must be some rogue or mad man creating a disturbance. He seeks to force open the door with a crowbar but is dissuaded by the merchant Balthazar. Then he leaves in rage, vowing that he will go to a courtesan at the sign of the *Porpentine* and ordering the goldsmith to bring his chain there.

**Scene 2.** The scene opens with some pretty love-making between Antipholus S. and Luciana—very innocent on the part of the former though Luciana thinks it very odd that her sister's husband should behave like this. In fact, she promises to inform her sister of the matter and leaves.

Meanwhile a parallel scene of love-making is taking place in the kitchen between the kitchen maid, Nell and Dromio S.—not at all to the liking of the latter who now comes and gives an amusing description of it to his master.

Master and man both think that the whole place is bewitched. Antipholus S. is resolved to quit the city at once and sends Dromio S. to look out for a ship—any ship starting for anywhere so that it left Ephesus behind. Dromio departs upon his errand: and then as Antipholus himself is leaving the goldsmith spies him, mistakes him for his brother Antipholus E. presses upon him the gold chain which the latter had ordered, won't listen to the younger Antipholus's protestations, won't even take any money from him, and leaves saying that he will receive the price at supper time at 5 o'clock.

(Thus Antipholus S. has now been mistaken for Antipholus E. by Dromio E., by Adriana and her sister, and by the goldsmith. The converse series of errors, viz. for Antipholus E. to be mistaken for Antipholus S. will now begin.)

## ACT IV.

(The time throughout is somewhere between 3 and 5 o'clock.)

**Scene 1.** We have seen that the goldsmith (master Angelo), after pressing his neck-chain upon the reluctant Antipholus S left him near the door-steps of Antipholus E and proceeded onward. Now this goldsmith was in debt to a merchant who was leaving for Persia to-day and so was in urgent need of money. So he meets the goldsmith with an officer in his company and says that he will either have the money or give Angelo in custody to the officer. Angelo says that he will get from Antipholus E the precise amount in which he was indebted to the merchant and that he will discharge his debt with this money.

Meanwhile, Antipholus E. (all unsuspecting of Angelo's demand upon him) arrives on the scene : the goldsmith demands the price for his neck-chain : he, after some badinage, angrily refuses ; and then, on the goldsmith's suit, he also is taken in custody.

Dromio S. now enters the stage in quest of his master, Antipholus S. and with the news that he has hired passage in a ship. He takes Antipholus E for his master and is proceeding to give his message when he is stopped by Antipholus E. who, for his part, has mistaken him for his own servant and who now commands him to go to Adriana and bring money enough to procure his release. Dromio S is bewildered but goes to discharge his errand.

**Scene 2.** Luciana and Adriana are discussing the strange conduct of the supposed Antipholus E. when Dromio S. enters panting with the news that the master has been arrested and is being dragged to jail. Adriana, though puzzled, at once sends the required sum through the servant and promises to follow.

**Scene 3.** Dromio S. as he is taking the money for the release of the arrested Antipholus E. comes, in the way, upon his own master, naturally mistakes him for the man whose release he is going to procure, and hands over the money to him.

To them enters the courtesan with whom Antipholus had vowed in his rage to dine. It seems that Antipholus E. (not content with dining in her company) had promised also to give her a gold-chain and the courtesan—as payment in advance for such a good bargain—had given him her own gold ring. Finding the promised gold-chain upon Antipholus's neck, he now demands it from him. Antipholus S. (knowing nothing of the matter) naturally repudiates the demand. Then the courtesan wants to have back her own ring; and when this also is refused by Antipholus S., the woman resolves upon seeing Adriana and telling her a cock-and-bull story of how her husband had gone mad and snatched away a ring from her in his fit of madness.

**Scene 4.** We now return to Antipholus E who is being taken to jail by the officer, promising all the while that money will soon be coming to bail him out.

He is first met by Dromio E whom he had commissioned to purchase a rope with which to beat Adriana and the servants for having shut them out. But he supposes that this is Dromio S who had been sent to fetch money from Adriana. In this supposition he demands the money; Dromio E. naturally fails to understand him and gets beaten.

While this beating is taking place, Adriana, Luciana and the courtesan arrive accompanied by a conjurer, named Pinch. Her husband's violent behaviour confirms Adriana in the suspicion that he has gone mad; and this idea is further strengthened when Antipholus E beats the conjurer Pinch. Meanwhile Pinch and several others proceed to bind both master and man. The officer first protests, but is pacified when Adriana promises to recompense him for any possible loss to which he may be put. Then Antipholus E and Dromio E (both bound) are led in the direction of their own house accompanied by Pinch.

Shortly afterwards Dromio S and Antipholus S enter with swords drawn. Adriana, Luciana and the officer take them for the mad men broke loose and fly away for fear; Antipholus S reaffirms his intention of leaving the place at once.

## ACT V.

(Hitherto we had the errors, we are now going to have the solution of the errors.)

**Scene 1.** It is now about 5 O'clock, and the scene is in front of a priory of which Æmilia, Aegeon's wife, is the Lady Abbess.

First, we find the goldsmith and the merchant, his creditor, discussing the inexplicable conduct of Antipholus E in having repudiated his debt.

To them enter Antipholus S. and Dromio S. The former (being mistaken for Antipholus E) is taxed with having repudiated his just debt, denies the charge, and has hot words with the merchant in consequence.

To them enter Adriana and Luciana, and at this sight Antipholus S and his servant flee away for shelter to the Priory.

The Lady Abbess now comes out; and, after rebuking Adriana for her jealous disposition, refuses to give back the men who had taken shelter in her abbey.

The Duke, accompanied by Aegeon who is being taken to the place of beheading, now enters the scene, and Adriana demands justice from him against the Abbess who, she says, has refused to give up her husband.

Antipholus E and Dromio E who have succeeded in breaking loose from Pinch's custody now enter, and they also demand justice from the Duke. There are naturally various discrepancies between the accounts of Antipholus E, Adriana, Luciana, Dromio E and the goldsmith; and the Duke is bewildered by the confusion.

To increase the confusion, Aegeon claims Antipholus E for his son (mistaking him for Antipholus S) and is naturally repudiated by the latter.

At this time, the Lady Abbess comes out; she sees Aegeon, she sees Antipholus E and Dromio E. she has already seen Dromio S. and Antipholus S.; and she understands the situation in a trice. She produces Antipholus S and Dromio S and the whole matter, with its endless chain of confusions, is soon explained.



#### 4. Time scheme of the play.

From the notes of time given above, it will be seen that the whole action of the drama is comprised within one day—from some time in the morning when Aegeon narrates his story till five o'clock in the afternoon when the denouement takes place in front of the priory.

1. Thus it is evidently morning when Aegeon relates his story. (He is given the whole day to make up his ransom by begging or borrowing (I. I. 15) and the Duke characterises his account as his '*morning*' story.' (V. I. 360.)
2. It is 12 o'clock in Act I. 2 when Antipholus S is invited to dinner. (I 2. 45)
3. In II. I where Adriana and Luciana are impatiently waiting dinner for Antipholus, it is 2 o'clock. (See II. I. 3 ; also II. 2. 153)
4. The other crowded incidents of the play—the dinner, the mistake by the goldsmith, the arrest and the subsequent rescue—evidently take place between 2 and 5 o'clock.
5. In the last scene, it is 5 o'clock. (V. I. 120) "The dial points at five."

But the *story of the drama* apart from *the action of the play* is spread over a period of something like 35 years. (This difference is what is meant by speaking of double time—viz. *real* time—the time actually covered by certain occurrences—and *dramatic* time—i.e. the time taken in the representation of these occurrences.) Thus, from the birth of the twins to the time when the younger Antipholus sets out in quest of his lost brother and mother, it is 18 years ; and it is another 7 years between that date and the period of action. (V. I. 324.) "It is seven years since, in Syracuse bay, thou knowest we parted," There is some *apparent* discrepancy between this statement of Aegeon and his previous statement in I. 1 to the effect that he had spent 'five summers' in 'wandering through furthest Greece etc.'—But we should remember that Aegeon must have set out in quest of his younger son sometime *after* the latter's departure.

### 5. The characters.

The characterization, as in all Shakespeare's early plays, is vague and shadowy. In fact, in these early comedies, Shakespeare trusts for success to skillful evolution of the plot, clever *denouement* of the story, and briskness and animation of dialogue; and painting of character is only a minor and secondary concern with him.

Thus, in the present play, more than half the characters are hardly dramatic characters in any real sense of the term, and this remark—besides including Angelo, Balthazar, Pinch and the two merchants—would extend also to Solmus, Aegeon and Aemelia. They are conventional stage-figures who utter conventional and most respectable speeches and who are manipulated and stage-managed with a considerable amount of dexterity; but there is no movement of life or passion in them; nothing ever happens to their character, and they never respond to any impulse of feeling or emotion. In fact, Shakespeare never bothered about the development of these uninteresting and conventional personages; and it is idle and ridiculous to attempt any elaborate analysis of characters which Shakespeare never meant to analyse or develop.

Take the character of Solinus, the Duke for example. In the course of the whole drama he appears only twice, does not speak more than 50 lines in all, and all that we gather from his speeches is that he is a rather kindly-hearted person who dislikes having to put an unpleasant law into rigorous execution. And yet commentators have spent much time and ingenuity in dwelling upon his character as judge, as soldier and as what not.

But though most of the characters have been described rather than developed, there is some attempt at characterisation in the case of the following, viz. the two Antipholuses, the two Dromios and the two sisters, Adriana and Luciana.

**The two Antipholuses.** It is evident that the two Antipholuses, like the two Dromios, are intended to form a contrasted

pair.\* Thus Antipholus of Syracuse who has spent seven years of life in fruitless quest of his mother and brother is naturally rather depressed and melancholy. But his melancholy does not prevent him from indulging in much light badinage with his attendant, Dromio, in which the master invariably comes off second best. Also we are given to understand that he is amiable and intellectual, steady and constant, and withal possessing a strong vein of sentimentality in his character. In fact, nothing could be more attractive than the sentimental prettiness of his love-making to Luciana in Act III. scene 2. But with all this romanticism and sentimentality, there is a marked dash of worldly circumspection in our young hero; and when the illusions of Ephesus begin to multiply too thick and fast for his comfort he makes preparation for instant departure from the city.

The twin brother, Antipholus of Ephesus, is of a much coarser grain both as regards intellect and character. He is headstrong, passionate, lustful and altogether of a coarse moral stamp of being. Naturally irritated at being shut out from his own house, there is yet something ugly and gross in his going off to a courtesan's by way of revenge. Besides, he is brutal in his passionate resentment against his wife, and promises to bestow a rope's end between her and her confederates. "Altogether, from the point of dramatic retribution, he probably deserves all the hard treatment that Shakespeare has meted out to him." (It should be noticed that the two Antipholuses, besides being contrasted among themselves are also each contrasted with the twin-Dromio attendant upon himself. Thus the melancholy of the younger Antipholus is in sharp contrast with the exuberant animal spirits of his servant,

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\* But the student must carefully notice that this contrast has never been pushed too far, or the illusion of verisimilitude would be destroyed. It is necessary that the two brothers must be capable of being mistaken one for the other, and in spite of their physical similarity this could not happen if their characters were contrasted too sharply. People who are inclined to dwell too much on the contrast between these two characters should bear this caution in mind.

while the passionate impulsiveness of Antipholus of Ephesus is contrasted with the formality and precision of the elder Dromio. It should be noted, however, that this contrast is much sharper in the case of the former than of the latter pair.) •

**The two Dromios.** The contrast between the attendant twins is well marked and definite as is the contrast between their masters. Thus the younger Dromio (attendant upon Antipholus S.) is evidently a fellow of infinite mirth; he just overflows with fun, frivolity and animal spirit and is master of an exhaustless store of verbal conceit. His wit appears most strikingly in his exchange of light badinage with his master in II. i., in the vivid, amusing if rather coarse description which he gives of his 'fat friend', the kitchen maid Nell, and lastly in the niagara of epithets which he bestows upon the officer of the jail. Dromio of Ephesus, though witty after his own fashion. (see I. 2 where he invites Antipholus S. to dinner, and IV. 4 where he gets well beaten by his own proper master) is yet much more formal and precise than his mercurial younger brother "as befits a discreet and well-mannered servant who has passed his whole life in the town."

**The two Sisters**—Adriana strikes one as a rather unfortunate creature. It was at the Duke's command (his 'important' letter) that she had married Antipholus in order to endow the latter with her rich possessions. But evidently she was older than Antipholus: and the natural consequence had followed. She caring more for her husband than her husband cared for her. The result was perpetual strife and discord in the family—the nagging of a shrewish wife on one side being met by the coarse bullying of a lewd-minded husband on the other. It seems that Antipholus stood in some wholesome awe of his wife, for in III. i. he carefully instructs the goldsmith to offer due excuses for his delay. But then it seems equally certain that his wife was often unduly and unnaturally suspicious: and it is her perpetual jealousy which may have originally turned his husband's mind against her. However, jealous or not, there is no doubt, that she is passionately attached to her husband: and even when heaping abuse upon her

inconstant husband," we are told that she, "thinks better of him than she says."\*

LUCIANA has been praised for her beauty, gentleness and all manner of good qualities. But the fact of the matter is that she is a wholly colourless person without any individuality whatever. She is just prim and—what is called—'nice' in a school-girlish sort of way, and withal has a stock of worldly wisdom which sits rather oddly upon her. But she has certainly more sense and prudence than her sister and is altogether a more temperate and better-balanced person.

The Courtesan, though a minor character, cannot be passed over without notice. Evidently she knows her business. When Antipholus, in a huff with his wife, promises to give her a valuable gold chain, she wants to clinch the bargain by giving him her own ring (perhaps a paltry piece of jewellery) as a sort of payment in advance. Ultimately, when the chance of receiving the chain become extremely thin, she takes the matter very coolly, but is resolved that she must not lose her ring also and with that end promptly invents a lie which she carries hotfoot to Adriana.

## 6. Brief Criticism.

The glory of drama—of Shakespeare's drama in particular—lies in the clash and interplay of contending passions. Persons of contrasted temperament are driven together upon the stage of life by the stress and impact of circumstances and are placed in various relations of affinity and opposition. And it is the business of drama to deal with the complex situations that may arise from the varying inter-relation of these contrasted temperaments. But of this stress and strife of jarring personalities we have no trace in the *Comedy of Errors*. In fact, Comedy by its very nature

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\* It has been said that Adriana's speech "I will attend my husband be his nurse" is an instance of her loving kindness towards her husband. But it is nothing of the sort : it is only a jealous woman's assertion of proprietary right over her husband.

forbears to trench upon the reign of strenuous passion which is the high and peculiar province of Tragedy.

Then, again, coming to a lower plane, so to say—we have that vivid and sympathetic delineation of human character through the medium of dialogue and dramatic situation which is universally regarded as the chief and peculiar province of the Drama. But here also the *Comedy of Errors* is signally deficient. Most of the characters have been described rather than developed: and even where some characterisation has been consciously attempted, the result is unsatisfactory and merely conventional.

But as against these defects we have some features of compensation —

- (1) In the first place, the plot is evolved with great ingenuity and skill. Once the original postulate (viz. the possibility of confusion between two pairs of twins) is granted, the errors follow one another so naturally and yet with such bewildering rapidity of succession that interest in the story never flags. In fact, in the *Comedy of Errors* Shakespeare has already become a past master in the art of plot construction and a comparison of the drama with Plautus's *Menachmi* will be sufficient to show Shakespeare's immense superiority in this respect over his Latin original.
- (2) Then again, there is a briskness, animation and buoyancy in the dialogue as well as in the movement of the story which is very fascinating. In fact, *swiftness* is the dominant note of the play; the whole story moves swiftly on from point to point till it ends in a happy and delightful finale; and throughout one never experiences a moment of dullness or flagging attention.
- (3) Lastly, there is much pleasant and harmless fooling specially when one or other of the Dromios is upon the stage. Perhaps the younger Dromio sometimes strains a point in his hunt after puns and quibbles but there is so much of buoyant animal vitality even in this juggling with words that we are apt to lose sight of this defect.

## 7. Topical References.

We are asked to believe that the story happens at Ephesus and that the persons are the Greek settlers to *Magna Grecia* in some of their various branches. But Shakespeare, to confess the truth, makes only the faintest attempt at producing any effect of verisimilitude. and beneath the thin disguise of foreign names and localities, we everywhere perceive that the scene is in London and that the persons are Shakespeare's contemporaries—English man and women living amid scenes and surroundings which are typically English.—

A few of these topical references may be usefully given below.

- (1) Thus the "enmity and discord" referred to by the Duke of Ephesus as existing between Ephesus and Syracuse may well be taken as referring to the hostility that had existed for sometime between the maritime nations of Spain and England. English merchants and navigators were arrested and left to rot in the prisons of Spain and Elizabeth reciprocated the treatment by retaliatory measures against the fleet and merchants of Spain.
- (2) The 'mart' which plays such a conspicuous part in the play (where Antipholus S. walks about to peruse the manners of the town and whence Dromio E. is commanded to fetch his master) was evidently suggested by the Royal Exchange founded by Sir Thomas Gresham.
- (3) Antipholus the citizen lives at the sign of the *Phocæa*: very much in the manner in which the merchants and tradesmen of London lived over their shops which of course, were distinguished by appropriate signs.
- (4) Inns played a conspicuous part in the economy of Elizabethan life; and in the *Comedy of Errors*, we have a superabundance of inns—the Centaur, the Tiger and presumably also the Porpentine.
- (5) The names of Antipholus's servants are pure English—Bridget, Marian, Cicely, Gillian, Ginn. (III, i. 32.)

- (6) The reference to punishment by putting one in the stocks (III. i. 67), to paying the saddler *sixpence* (I. 2. 56), and to the *Gossios' feast* are pure English. (V. 1. 410)
- (7) The Priory seems to have been suggested by the Priory of Holywell near which Shakespeare lived and worked ; and the 'melancholy place of death and execution' behind the ditches of the abbey would seem to be Wapping which was a place of execution for pirates and sea rovers.

## 8. Place-names in the play.

Altogether there are three towns mentioned in the *Comedy of Errors*—Syracuse which seems to have been the native place of Aegeon, Epidamnus where he had gone for business and in returning from where he met with his mishap, and Ephesus where the action takes place.

Of these places, *Ephesus* was an ancient city of Ionia on the sea-coast of Asia Minor, famous for its great temple of Diana which was regarded as one of the marvels of the world. The city has been totally destroyed, and to-day its very site is unknown.

*Syracuse* was the chief Greek settlement of Sicily and is famous for its great siege during the Peloponnesian War.

*Epidamnus* which was later changed to Dyrrachium would correspond to the modern Durazzo. It stood on the eastern shore of the Adriatic nearly opposite Brundisium (modern Brindisi.)

(In Plautus, the scene of action is at Epidamnus, but Shakespeare changes the venue, evidently because Ephesus was prominently associated with the practice of magic and witchcraft.)

In I. i. 94 we are told of two ships from Corinth and Epidaurus which met the mast on which Aegeon and his family were floating. Now Epidaurus was a town of Laconia on the Saronic gulf ; and Corinth also had a port, Cenchrae, on the same gulf. It was from these ports therefore that the ships must have come ; and they may have met the mast at the mouth of the Saronic gulf outside the Ionian island. (See notes.)



## APPENDIX TO THE INTRODUCTION.

## ✓ A. The Mænechmi: and Shakespeare's deviations from it.

In Plautus's story we are told that a Sicilian merchant had two children (twins) of the names of *Menechmus* and *Sociolus*. Of these, the first being stolen in early infancy, his name was given to the other. This latter, *Menechmus Sociolus* or the travelling *Menechmus* on reaching maturity, went out in search of his brother; and in course of his wandering came to Epidamnium where the other *Menechmus* is dwelling. His resemblance to his twin (the citizen *Menechmus*) naturally leads to errors and confusion; and, in Plautus's Comedy, it is these errors which are the material of the play.

After the opening of the play we find that *Menechmus* the citizen (accompanied by his parasite *Peniculus*) has made an engagement to dine with a courtesan named *Erotium*. But *Erotium's* servant makes the very natural mistake of taking *Menechmus* the traveller (who has just landed) for the citizen. The result is that *Menechmus* the traveller dines with the courtesan, and is entrusted by her with a cloak which has been purloined by his brother from his wife and with a chain which is *Erotium's* own property—the first to be taken to a dyer in order to be cleaned and dyed and the second to be repaired by a goldsmith.

Meanwhile the wife of the citizen *Menechmus* (egged on by *Peniculus*) takes her husband to task for the loss of her cloak and sends him to reclaim it from *Erotium*.

Meanwhile, walking through the city, she herself comes upon *Menechmus* the traveller with the telltale cloak upon his shoulders, and naturally mistakes him for her husband. Recriminations ensue; and the wife (*Mulier*) calls in her father (*Senex*) to her help. *Menechmus* is charged with madness, and actually feigns madness, to deceive them. But when they go in search of a doctor, he makes his escape to the ship.

Mulier and Senex returning with a doctor (*Medicus* corresponding to Pinch in Shakespeare's play upon *Menechemus C.* who is on the point of being forcibly arrested when he is saved by the timely appearance of *Menechmus T.*'s servant; and the citizen in his gratitude at being saved promises the slave his freedom.

Shortly afterwards, the slave comes upon his own master whom he reminds of the promise of freedom. But of course *Menechemus T.* knows nothing of it and is on the point of beating his servant when the citizen *Menechmus* arrives upon the scene, and the whole mystery is cleared up.

Let us see how Shakespeare modifies this story to suit his own purposes

1. In the first place, he discards such superfluous figures as the parasite *Peniculus*, the father-in-law *Senex*, and the servant of *Erotium*

But his additions are important than his omissions.

2. Thus he fills out the story by the introduction of the twin *Dromios* with all their infinite humour and drollery.

3. He imparts a love-element to the drama by the introduction of *Luciana*.

4. He supplies a pathetic background to the story (and thus makes the comedy more effective) by introducing the account of *Aegeon* and his shipwreck.

"In short,"—to quote the language of Mr. Henry Cunningham—"there is such wealth of new invention and construction in the *Errors* as to raise it to the status of an original play."

## **B. Characteristics which mark out the 'Errors' as one of Shakespeare's early plays.**

Like *Love's Labour Lost* and the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, the *Errors* also has been regarded as one of Shakespeare's early plays--and this quite apart from any evidence of date and simply upon the style, language and characterization of the play. It may be just as well therefore to deal with some of the literary characteristics of these early plays.

(1) In the first place, there is the question of character-painting. This skill in characterization which is the crowning glory of Shakespeare's later tragedies appears but faintly in the earlier dramas.

(2) Then there is the question of rhyme. As Shakespeare grew in maturity of dramatic art, he began to discard rhyme more and more and to stick more and more closely to blank verse. But in the *Errors*, rhyme constitutes fully one third of the book—a proportion which is unusually large as compared with Shakespeare's later work.

(3) The rhymed quatrains and couplets which we find in the love-scene of the play (III. 2) bear a marked affinity to *Venus and Adonis* and the *Rape of Lucrece*—poems which we know were written and published in the early part of Shakespeare's life.

(4) Noticeable also is the very large proportion of the comic trimeter (the rhyme doggerel of Chaucer's *Sir Thopas*) which occurs in the play. There are about 100 lines of this verse and they have been put generally in the mouth of one of the Dromio brothers.

(5) Lastly, there are those interminable puns, quibbles and verbal conceits of which we have such a copious supply in the play.

### C. Shakespeare's Latin.

This question becomes of importance in considering as to whether Shakespeare went to the original of Plautus or only consulted a translation in writing his Comedy. No doubt Shakespeare knew some Latin; but the balance of opinion would seem to be in favour of the view that he read Latin with difficulty and therefore was much more likely to have consulted a translation than the original Text in getting up his plot.

The reasons in support of this view may be thus indicated.

(1) In the first place, there is the standing gibe—not meant as a gibe at all but as a plain statement of fact—that Shakespeare knew 'little Latin and less Greek',

(2) Then, though Shakespeare was a pupil in the Grammar-school of Strafford in his youth, the decaying circumstances of his father seem to have led to his early withdrawal from the place, and it is unlikely that in the short period of his schooling he acquired any very profound acquaintance with Latin.

(3) Again, the early days of Shakespeare's career in London were a perpetual fight with poverty—a strenuous attempt to secure a foothold for himself in the shifting sands of London's crowded and turbid swirl of life: and it is extremely unlikely that he could have found any opportunity during this 'scrambling' time to mend the deficiencies of his early education.

(4) Later on, what between acting, managing and play-writing, Shakespeare's time seems to have been too fully occupied to have allowed any opportunity for leisurely study.

The conclusion seems to be plain, therefore, that Shakespeare never had any very ripe or profound acquaintance with Latin. Such being the case—and considering his swift and facile methods of composition—it is improbable that he would have bothered himself about plodding through the heavy pages of an obscure text when a translation was near at hand.

### D. Shakespeare's Law.

Malone first started the theory that Shakespeare must have spent some part of his London life as a clerk or apprentice in an attorney's office. This conclusion seems to be based upon the fact that the 'technical language of the law' runs from his pen with an aptness and facility which is very unusual in an outsider and which points unmistakably to a close and inside acquaintance with the law.

Others have sought to explain away the fact—partly (1) by the universality and what may be called the mobility of Shakespeare's genius; (2) partly by the supposition that he must have colloqued with lawyers, and thus picked up a casual familiarity with the current phrases of the law; and (3) partly on the ground that his father was involved in a good deal litigation and that he, as his

father's son, could not have helped picking up a certain necessary familiarity with the technical language of the law.

Without taking up the task of pronouncing upon the general merits of the question, let us consider the matter in its bearing upon the present play.

Mr. Henry Cunningham who argues strenuously in favour of the theory that Shakespeare had passed some part of his life in an attorney's office and had thus acquired a working familiarity with the law has compiled, in support of his view, a list of the legal expressions used by Shakespeare in the *Comedy of Errors*

Below we give his list in extenso, and our observations thereupon.

(1) *References to the law of property and conveyancing.*

(a) This *fool-begged* patience in thee will be left. (II. i. 41.)

(b) And make a *common* of my serious hours. (II. ii. 29.)

(c) There's no time for a man to *recover* his hair.

May he not do it by *fine* and *recovery*? (II. ii. 71-73.)

(d) That you beat me at the mart, I have your *hand* to shew. (III. i. 12)

(e) If the *skin* were *parchment*, and the blows you gave me were ink (III. i. 13.)

(f) It is a branch and *parcel* of mine oath (V. i. 108.)

(2) *References to legal procedure.*

(a) Now, trust me, were it not against our law,  
Against my crown, my oath, my dignity,  
Which princes, would they, may not *disannul*  
My soul should *sue* as *advocate* for thee (I. i. 144-147.)

(b) For slander lives upon *succession*, for ever housed  
where it gets *possession*. (III. i. 112-113)

(c) I'll *attach* you by the *officer*. (IV. i. 6.)

(d) No, he is in Tartar limbo, worse than *hell*. (IV. ii. 56).



Very unsafe to conclude from them that they indicate any intimate familiarity with the law.—In fact, as we have said before, there are only two expressions which betray an unmistakable familiarity with the law—viz, the phrase about 'fine and recovery' (II. 2. 73) and the other expression about 'succession and possession' (III. i. 112—113) 'Fool-begged'—if we were quite sure that it referred to the custom of 'begging one as a fool'—would point to the same conclusion : but the matter is far from being clear.

**THE COMEDY OF ERRORS.**



## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SOLINUS, duke of Ephesus.

ÆGEON, a merchant of Syracuse.

ANTIPHOLUS of Ephesus, { twin brothers, and sons to Ægeon and

ANTIPHOLUS of Syracuse, { Emilia

DROMIO of Ephesus, { twin brothers, and attendants on the two

DROMIO of Syracuse, { Antipholuses.

BALTHAZAR, a merchant.

ANGELO, a goldsmith

First Merchant, friend to Antipholus of Syracuse.

Second Merchant, to whom Angelo is a debtor.

PINCH, a schoolmaster.

EMILIA, wife to Ægeon, an abbess of Ephesus.

ADRIANA, wife to Antipholus of Ephesus.

LUCIANA, her sister.

LUCE, servant to Adriana.

A Courtezan.

Coaler, Officers, and other Attendants

SCENE : *Ephesus.*

DURATION OF ACTION,

A single day, ending about 5 P. M.

# THE COMEDY OF ERRORS.

## ACT I.

### SCENE I. *A hall in the DUKE's palace.*

*Enter DUKE, ÆGEON, Gaoler, Officers, and other Attendants.*

*Æge.* Proceed, Solinus, to procure my fall  
And by the doom of death end woes and all.

*Duke.* Merchant of Syracuse, plead no more ;  
I am not partial to infringe our laws :  
The enmity and discord which of late  
Sprung from the rancorous outrage of your duke  
To merchants, our well-dealing countrymen,  
Who, wanting guilders to redeem their lives,  
Have seal'd his rigorous statute with their bloods,  
Excludes all pity from our threatening looks. 10

## ACT I.

### SCENE I. *A hall etc.*

*Ægeon*—Proceed, Solinus, to bring about my ruin; and by passing sentence of death against me, put an end to this miserable existence of mine.

*Duke*—Merchant of Syracuse, do not plead further for your life, for I am reluctant to break the laws of our country. Besides, all pity is banished from my looks when I remember the enmity and discord that now prevail between our countries and which is the result of the vindictive malice with which your Duke has pursued our merchants—men engaged in the lawful pursuit of commerce, who, for want of money to redeem their lives, have satisfied the vengeful requirements of your laws by shedding their blood. And since the outbreak

For, since the mortal and intestine jars  
 'Twixt thy seditious countrymen and us,  
 It hath in solemn synods been decreed,  
 Both by the Syracusians and ourselves,  
 To admit no traffic to our adverse towns : 15  
 Nay, more,  
 If any born at Ephesus be seen  
 At any Syracusian marts and fairs ;  
 Again, if any Syracusian born  
 Come to the bay of Ephesus, he dies, 20  
 His goods confiscate to the duke's dispose,  
 Unless a thousand marks be levied,  
 To quit the penalty and to ransom him.  
 Thy substance, valued at the highest rate,  
 Cannot amount unto a hundred marks ; 25  
 Therefore, by law thou art condemn'd to die.

*Ege.* Yet this my comfort : when your words  
 are done,

My woes end likewise with the evening sun.

of this fatal feud between our two countries, it has been decreed in solemn council both by us and by the Syracusians that there should be no intercourse of commerce between ourselves. Nay, if any man born at Ephesus is seen in the fairs and markets of Syracuse or if any man born in Syracuse lands in the bay of Ephesus, he will be forthwith sentenced to death and his goods will be confiscated and placed at the disposal of the Duke—unless he can pay a fine of 1000 marks to fulfil the penalty and redeem his life. But the total worth of all your property estimated at its highest value cannot exceed 100 marks ; and therefore under the due requirements of the law you must be condemned to death.

*Egeon*—Yet I have one comfort in death, viz. that my woes also will end with life when your sentence is carried into execution.

*Duke.* Well, Syracusan, say in brief the cause 30  
Why thou departed'st from thy native home,  
And for what cause thou camest to Ephesus.

*Ege.* A heavier task could not have been imposed,  
Than I to speak my griefs unspeakable :

Yet, that the world may witness that my end 35  
Was wrought by nature, not by vile offence,  
I'll utter what my sorrow gives me leave.

In Syracuse was I born, and wed  
Unto a woman, happy but for me,  
And by me too, had not our hap been bad. 40

With her I lived in joy ; our wealth increased  
By prosperous voyages I often made  
To Epidamnus ; till my factor's death,  
And the great care of goods at random left,  
Drew me from kind embracements of my spouse : 45  
From whom my absenee was not six months old,

*Duke*—Well, Syracusan, tell me briefly as to how you left your native home and why it is that you have come to Ephesus.

*Egeon*—No more grievous task could possibly be imposed upon me than to talk about the unspeakable misery of my life. Yet, so far as my sorrow allows me to do so, I will tell you everything in order that the world may know that I came here, not for the purpose of committing any offence but only prompted by the rooted affection of nature. I was born at Syracuse and was wedded to a woman who would have been happy but for me ; and, except for sheer ill luck, she would not have been rendered unhappy even by me. I lived happily with her for sometime, and our wealth continued to increase by successful commercial intercourse with Epidamnus. But after a time, the death of my factor (agent) and the consequent necessity of taking greater of my goods which had been left scattered in various places compelled me to leave home and withdraw from the embrace of my spouse. And ere six months were over, my

Before herself, almost at fainting under  
The pleasing punishment that women bear,  
Had made provision for her following me,  
And soon and safe arrived where I was. 50  
There had she not been long but she became  
A joyful mother of two goodly sons ;  
And, which was strange, the one so like the other,  
As could not be distinguish'd but by names.  
That very hour, and in the self-same inn, 55  
A meaner woman was delivered  
Of such a burden, male twins, both alike :  
Those, for their parents were exceeding poor,  
I bought, and brought up to attend my sons.  
My wife, not meanly proud of two such boys, 60  
Made daily motions for our home return :  
Unwilling I agreed ; alas ! too soon  
We came aboard.....  
A league from Epidamnum had we sail'd,  
Before the always wind-obeying deep 65

wife also—though labouring then under the heavy weight of pregnancy—made arrangements to follow me and joined me where I was, viz. at Epidamnum. Shortly afterwards she gave birth to a pair of lovely twins ; and strangely enough, these twins were exactly alike in all particulars and could be separately distinguished only by their separate names. Again, on that very day when my wife gave birth to this pair of twins, another woman of humble rank in the self-same inn was similarly delivered of another pair of twins, both exactly alike in appearance ; and as the parents ( of this latter pair ) were very poor we purchased the twins from them and brought them up to act respectively as the servants of our twin children. My wife, justly proud of our two handsome boys, urged me every day to return home. At last, unwillingly, I agreed to her proposal and came on board a ship, alas, too soon ! We had sailed a league

Gave any tragic instance of our harm :  
But longer did we not retain much hope ;  
For what obscured light the heavens did grant  
Did but convey unto our fearful minds  
A doubtful warrant of immediate death ; 70  
Which, though myself would gladly have embraced,  
Yet the incessant weepings of my wife,  
Weeping before for what she saw must come.  
And piteous plainings of the pretty babes,  
That mourn'd for fashion, ignorant what to fear, 75  
Forced me to seek delays for them and me.  
And this it was, for other means was none :  
The sailors sought for safety by our boat,  
And left the ship, then sinking-ripe, to us :  
My wife, more careful for the latter-born, 80  
Had fasten'd him unto a small spare mast,  
Such as seafaring men provide for storms  
To him one of the other twins was bound,

beyond Ephesus before the sea—always responsive to every impulse of wind—gave the least indication of alarm. But when danger came, it came all too swiftly and suddenly and allowed us no interval of hope; and the dim, faint light which came from the clouded face of the heavens only conveyed to our minds the fearful certainty of immediate death. For myself I was quite prepared to embrace death gladly when it came : but the incessant prayers of my wife, weeping for the fate which she found to be inevitable, and the piteous clamour of the babes who wept only for company being ignorant of the danger they ran—these compelled me to seek some respite for themselves and for me. And this was the arrangement that I made—there being no other means available, as the sailors had escaped in the boats and had left my family alone in the sinking ship : my wife, careful of the safety of the younger twin, fastened him to one of those spare masts which sailors sometimes keep in store to provide against the

Whilst I had been like heedful of the other :  
 The children thus disposed, my wife and I, 85  
 Fixing our eyes on whom our care was fix'd,  
 Fasten'd ourselves at either end the mast ;  
 And floating straight, obedient to the stream,  
 Was carried towards Corinth, as we thought.  
 At length the sun, gazing upon the earth, 90  
 Dispersed those vapours that offended us ;  
 And, by the benefit of his wished light,  
 The seas wax'd calm, and we discover'd  
 Two ships from far making amain to us,  
 Of Corinth that, of Epidaurus this : 95  
 But ere they came,—O, let me say no'more !  
 Gather the sequel by that went before.

*Duke.* Nay, forward, old man ; do not break off so ;  
 For we may pity, though not pardon thee.

*Æge.* O, had the gods done so, I had not now 100

emergency of storms, and together with the child she bound one of the attendant twins also ; while I performed a similar service for our elder child and the other twin (who attended upon him). Having thus disposed of the children, I and my wife bound ourselves respectively to either end of the mast—the attention of each being fixed upon the child of whom we had respectively taken charge. The mast, following the current of the sea, drifted straight on towards Corinth, as it seemed to us ; and when the sun peeped out again over the earth and dispersed the harmful darkness of mists and clouds, and the sea grew calm under the beneficent influence of this light, we found that two ships were making swiftly in our direction—one belonging to Corinth and another to Epidaurus. But ere we could reach them,—O, I cannot conclude this story, and I pray you to guess the rest !

*Duke*—Nay, go on with your story, old man. Do not break off thus prematurely ; for though I cannot pardon you by our laws yet our hearts are full of pity for you.

*Ægeon*—O, if the Gods had been equally pitiful, there would have

Worthily term'd them merciless to us !  
 For, ere the ships could meet by twice five leagues,  
 We were encounter'd by a mighty rock ;  
 Which being violently borne upon,  
 Our helpful ship was splitted in the midst ;                   105  
 So that, in this unjust divorce of us,  
 Fortune had left to both of us alike  
 What to delight in, what to sorrow for.  
 Her part, poor soul ! seeming as burdened  
 With lesser weight, but not with lesser woe,                   110  
 Was carried with more speed before the wind ;  
 And in our sight they three were taken up  
 By fishermen of Corinth, as we thought.  
 At length, another ship had seized on us ;  
 And, knowing whom it was their hap to save,                   115  
 Gave healthful welcome to their shipwreck'd guests ;

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been no occasion for me to reproach them for their cruelty as now I  
 can justly do ;\* for while the rescuing ships were still at a distance  
 of ten miles from us, we came upon a huge rock in our course; and  
 the mast, dashed violently against this rock, broke up in the middle.  
 Thus, by this cruel and unjust partition, both I and my wife were left  
 with something in which to take delight and something for which  
 to sorrow ever more. My wife's part of the mast (as being burdened  
 with lesser weight though not burdened with lesser woe)—was driven  
 more swiftly before the wind; and they three, in our very sight, were  
 taken up and rescued by fishermen from Corinth as they appeared  
 to be. After a time, we too were seized and rescued by the other  
 ship; and these people, recognising whom they had been fortunate  
 enough to save, gave a cordial welcome to us. Also, they would

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\* 'You say that you have pity for me.' But, if the gods had been  
 equally pitiful, there would have been no occasion for me to blame  
 them, for their cruelty—as now I can justly do!'



And would have<sup>c</sup> reft the fishers of their prey,  
 Had not their bark been very slow of sail ;  
 And therefore homeward did they bend their course.  
 Thus have you heard me sever'd from my bliss, 120  
 That by misfortunes was my life prolong'd,  
 To tell sad stories of my own mishaps.

*Duke.* And, for the sake of them thou sorrowest for,  
 Do me the favour to dilate at full  
 What hath befall'n of them and thee till now. 125

*Ege.* My youngest boy, and yet my eldest care,  
 At eighteen years became inquisitive  
 After his brother : and importuned me<sup>t</sup>  
 That his attendant—so his case was like,

gladly have rescued the rest of my family from the fishing vessel of Corinth if their own ship had not been too slow and thus unable to overtake the other ; and so (reluctantly) they turn their course homewards Thus I have told you the whole story of how I was divorced from happiness and how it is misfortune alone that has lengthened out my life in order that I may have to tell the sad story of my life, in my old age

*Duke*—In the name of your lost family, I beg that you will tell me in detail as to what has happened to you and to them in this long interval.

*Egeon*—My youngest child—who yet was the first object of my care—became curious about the fate of his brother when he was about 18 years of age \* and he entreated me further that, in search of his brother, he should be attended by his servant—for this servant also was in similar plight with himself ; he too had lost his twin

\* Notice the discrepancy between the account given here and at 11. 78. There we were told that it was the mother who took charge of the youngest child while here it is suggested that the youngest remained, with the father. (Throughout the rest of the play, it is implicitly taken for granted that it was the younger Antipholus who was rescued with his father).

Reft of his brother, but retain'd his name— 130  
 Might bear him company in the quest of him :  
 Whom whilst I labour'd of a love to see,  
 I hazarded the loss of whom I loved.  
 Five summers have I spent in furthest Greece,  
 Roaming clean through the bounds of Asia, 135.  
 And, coasting homeward, came to Ephesus ;  
 Hopeless to find, yet loath to leave unsought  
 Or that or any place that harbours men.  
 But here must end the story of my life ;  
 And happy were I in my timely death, 140  
 Could all my travels warrant me they live.

*Duke.* Hapless Ægeon, whom the fates have mark'd  
 To bear the extremity of dire mishap !  
 Now, trust me, were it not against our laws,

brother and bore only the name to remind him of the loss. Thus it happened that, in my loving anxiety to see the child whom I had lost, I hazarded the loss of the child whom I possessed.† Since then I have spent five years in wandering all over the regions of further Greece ; have quite ranged through the bounds of Asia from one end to another ; and have at last arrived at Ephesus on my way back to home—hopeless of ever finding my children and yet unwilling to leave unsought any place where man may dwell. But here at last the story of my life comes to a close ; and yet I should gladly meet death if only my travels could give me the assurance that my children were alive !

*Duke*—Unfortunate Ægeon, surely you have been singled out by the Fates in order to bear the direst extremities of misfortune ! Believe me, I would myself have gladly pleaded for your life if such a

† Mark the antithesis. '*To possess the child I had lost, I hazarded the loss of the child I possessed.*'

Against my crown, my oath, my dignity, 145  
 Which princes, would they, may not disannul,  
 My soul should sue as advocate for thee.  
 But though thou art adjudged to the death  
 And passed sentence may not be recall'd  
 But to our honour's great disparagement, 150  
 Yet will I favour thee in what I can.  
 Therefore, merchant, I'll limit thee this day  
 To seek thy life by beneficial help :  
 Try all the friends thou hast in Ephesus ;  
 Beg thou, or borrow, to make up the sum, 155  
 And live ; if no, then thou art doom'd to die.  
 Gaoler, take him to thy custody.  
*Gaol.* I will, my lord.  
*Æge.* Hopeless and helpless doth Ægeon wend,  
 But to procrastinate his lifeless end. *[Exeunt.* 160

course had not been against my position as sovereign, and against my royal oath and the laws of our country—laws which kings must not abrogate even if they wish to do so. But though you have been sentenced to death and the sentence cannot be annulled except to the loss of my honour, yet I will show you as much favour as I can. Therefore, merchant, I give you respite for a day in order that, by the kindly help of generous persons, you may get money to redeem your life. Try all the friends that you may have at Ephesus, and seek, by begging or borrowing, to make up the money that is required for your ransom. If you cannot do that then of course you are fated to meet death. Meanwhile, Jailor, take him in custody.

*Gaoler—*

*Æ.*—I go forth helpless, and hopeless of receiving any help ; and this delay but serves to lengthen out the miserable end of my life.

SCENE II. *The Mart*

*Enter* ANTIPHOLUS of Syracuse; DROMIO of  
Syracuse, *and* First Merchant.

*First Mer.* Therefore, give out you are of Epidamnum,

Lest that your goods too soon be confiscate,

This very day, a Syracusian merchant

Is apprehended for arrival here ;

And, not being able to buy out his life,

5

According to the statute of the town,

Dies ere the weary sun set in the west.

There is your money that I had to keep.

*Ant. S.* Go bear it to the Centaur, where we host,

And stay there, Dromio, till I come to thee.

10

Within this hour it will be dinner time :

Till that, I'll view the manners of the town,

Peruse the traders, gaze upon the buildings,

And then return and sleep within mine inn ;

## SCENE 2.

*1st Merchant*—Do not let out the fact that you come from Syracuse; say rather that you belong to Epidamnum, for otherwise your goods will be at once confiscated. This very day a Syracusian merchant has been arrested for coming here ; and as he has not been able to pay the ransom that is required by the law of the town, he will have to die ere set of sun.—Meanwhile, here is the money that you entrusted to me.

*Ant. S.*—(Speaking to Dromio S.) Go, carry it to the inn where we are putting up, and stay there till my return. It is still an hour before dinner ; and till then I shall walk about, studying the manners of the place, viewing the merchants, and gazing upon the handsome houses of the city. And then I will return and sleep at

For with long travel I am stiff and weary. 15  
Get thee away.

*Dro. S.* Many a man would take you at your word,  
And go indeed, having so good a man. [ *Exit*

*Ant. S.* A trusty villain, sir, that very oft,  
When I am dull with care and melancholy, 20  
Lightens my humour with his merry jests.  
What, will you walk with me about the town,  
And then go to my inn and dine with me ?

*First Mer.* I am invited, sir, to certain merchants,  
Of whom I hope to make much benefit ; 25  
I crave your pardon. Soon at 5 o'clock,  
Please you, I'll meet with you upon the mart,

the inn, for I am stiff and tired with all my travels. Make off now  
and run to the inn.

*Dro. S.*—There are many servants who would promptly take you  
at your word and make off in real earnest having such easy means  
at his disposal \*

[Dromio goes away.]

*Ant. S.*—(Addressing the merchant) He is a trusty fellow, Sir ;  
and often when I am oppressed with care and melancholy, he cheers  
up my spirits with his merry jests. Well, will you come with me  
for a walk about the town ? And then we shall return together to  
the inn and dine in company.

*1st Mer*—I shall beg you to excuse me, Sir ; for I have been invit-  
ed by certain merchants and hope to make some profit out of them .  
but it pleases you, I shall meet you again at the Exchange at 5

\*The idea is this : 'You entrust me with a large sum of money  
and then ask me to make off. And having such ample means at his  
disposal, most servants would be ready to take you at your word,  
and make off in earnest—i.e. show you a clean pair of heels.'

And afterward consort you till bed-time :  
My present business calls me from you now.

*Ant. S.* Farewell till then : I will go lose myself, 30

And wander up and down to view the city.

*First Mer.* Sir, I commend you to your own content.

[*Exit.*

*Ant. S.* He that commends me to mine own content,  
Commends me to the thing I cannot get.

I to the world am like a drop of water, 35

That in the ocean seeks another drop ;

Who, falling there to find his fellow forth,

Unseen, inquisitive, confounds himself :

So I, to find a mother and a brother,

In quest of them, unhappy, lose myself, 40

*Enter DROMIO of Ephesus.*

Here comes the almanac of my true date.

What now ? how chance thou art returned so soon ?

O'clock sharp and afterwards remain in your company till bed-time.  
Meanwhile, the business I have in hand compels me to leave you now.

*Ant. S.*—Well then, farewell till 5 o'clock. Meanwhile I shall  
lose myself among the crowd in the streets and walk up and down  
the city.

*1st. Mer.*—Sir, I leave you to the enjoyment of your own happy  
thoughts.

*Age.*—The man, who leaves me to the enjoyment of my happiness,  
leaves me to enjoy something which I do not possess. My position  
in the world is like that of a tiny drop of water which, in the vast  
fields of the ocean, seeks union with another drop like into itself.  
In its attempt to find out its companion, this tiny drop—unseen  
itself but inquisitive still—loses itself among the waters of the sea ;  
and so I, in my unfortunate attempt to find out my mother and  
brother, lose myself among the crowded population of the streets.

[*Dromio of Ephesus enters*]

Here comes the exact remembrancer of my birth and age. What  
is the matter now ? How is it that you have returned so soon ?

*Dro. E.*—Returned so soon ? rather approach'd too late :  
 The capon burns, the pig falls from the spit,  
 The clock hath stricken twelve upon the bell ; 45  
 My mistress made it one upon my cheek :  
 She is so hot, because the meat is cold ;  
 The meat is cold, because you come not home ,  
 You come not home, because you have no stomach ;  
 You have no stomach, having broke your fast ; 50  
 But we that know what 'tis to fast and pray  
 Are penitent for your default to-day.

*Ant. S.* Stop in your wind, sir : tell me this, I pray :  
 Where have you left the money that I gave you ?

*Dro. E.* Oh.—sixpence, that I had o' Wednesday last 55

*Dro. E.*—Returned so soon ! Say rather that I have come too late.  
 Your dinner is over due the capon set for roasting is getting quite  
 burnt ; the pig is about to drop off from the spit ; it has struck twelve  
 upon the clock and my mistress has made it one upon my cheek.\*  
 My mistress is also hot and angry. She is hot because your dinner is  
 getting cold ; the dinner is getting cold because you don't come ; you  
 don't come because you have no appetite ; and you have no appetite  
 because you have already broken your fast. (So things work out very  
 prettily in your case ; but it is very different with us ! ) But we who  
 know what it is to taste the sufferings of hunger—it is we poor folk  
 who have to pay for your faults.

*Ant. E.*—Have done with this long-winged story of yours ! Only  
 I pray you, tell me this—where have you left the money which I en-  
 trusted to your care ?

*Dro. E.*—Money ! O, you mean that sum of 6d. which you gave me on

\*Note the pun in which Dromio indulges—'It has struck 12 on the  
 clock ; but my mistress has advanced the hour as it were ; she has  
 made it strike one by giving me a swinging blow on the cheek.'

To pay the saddler for my mistress' crupper ?

The saddler had it, sir ; I kept it not.

*Ant. S.* I am not in a sportive humour now :

Tell me, and dally not, where is the money ?

We being strangers here, how darest thou trust 60

So great a charge from thine own custody ?

*Dro. E.* I pray you, jest, sir, as you sit at dinner.

I from my mistress come to you in post ;

If I return, I shall be post indeed,

For she will score your fault upon my pate. 65

Methinks your maw, like mine, should be your clock,

And strike you home without a messenger.

*Ant. S.* Come, Dromio, come, these jests are out of  
season ;

Wednesday last in order to pay the saddler for supplying my mistress with her crupper ? Well, Sir, I did not keep it, I gave it immediately to the sadler to whom it was due.

*Ant. S.*—I am in no jesting humour now. Don't trifle with me, but tell me where the money is. Seeing that we are strangers here, how is it that you have ventured to entrust the money to another ?

*Dro. E.*—If you must be jesting, please jest when you sit at dinner. Meanwhile I have come post (come in hot haste) from your wife ; and if I return without you I shall be made a post in very deed and fact, for she will score your fault upon my head i.e. will outdo me soundly for your fault.\* Speaking for myself my stomach serves as my clock (i.e. it sends me home when it is time for dinner) ; and I wish that it would do so in your case too, so that you should return home at dinner-time without any messenger having to be sent for you.

*Ant. S.*—Come, come, Dromio, your jests are out of time ; reserve

\*Note the pun upon the words 'post,' 'post.' The first *post* means 'post haste' ; while the second *post* refers to the wooden post which used to stand in taverns and upon which scores were chalked for the purpose of reckoning.



Reserve them till a merrier hour than this.

Where is the gold I gave in charge to thee? 70

*Dro. E.* To me, sir? why, you gave no gold to me.

*Ant. S.* Come on, sir knave, have done your foolishness,  
And tell me how thou hast disposed thy charge.

*Dro. E.* My charge was but to fetch you from the mart  
Home to your house, the Phoenix, sir, to dinner. 75

My mistress and her sister stays for you.

*Ant. S.* Now, as I am a Christian, answer me  
In what safe place you have bestow'd my money;  
Or I shall break that merry scone of yours  
That stands on tricks when I am undisposed. 80  
Where is the thousand marks thou hadst of me?

*Dro. E.* I have some marks of yours upon my pate,  
Some of my mistress' marks upon my shoulders,  
But not a thousand marks between you both.

them for a season when I shall be merrier than now. Meanwhile,  
where is the gold that I gave to your care?

*Dro. E.*—Do you mean, Sir, that you gave any gold to me? Why,  
you have done nothing off the sort!

*Ant. S.*—Come on, you rogue; but an end to this folly and tell  
me straight what you have done with the money entrusted to you.

*Dro. E.*—Sir, my only order (charge) was to bring you from the  
market place to your home at the sign of the Phoenix. My mistress  
and her sister are waiting there for you to dine with them.

*Ant. S.*—Now, as I am a Christian you must tell me in whose  
custody you have kept the money, or I shall break the foolish head of  
yours which persists in jesting when I am not in the humour for it.  
Where is the sum of 1000 marks that I gave to you?

*Dro. E.*—No doubt, I bear some marks from you upon my head and  
I bear some marks from the mistress upon my shoulders; but surely  
all these taken together would not make up a thousand marks\* between

\*Notice the pun in 'marks'. In ll. 82, 83, the word means  
'marks of blows,' while in l. 84, it means the coin 'mark'.

If I should pay your worship those again,  
Perchance, you will not bear them patiently. 85

*Ant. S.* 'Thy mistress' marks ? ' what mistress, slave,  
hast thou ?

*Dro. E.* Your worship's wife, my mistress at the  
Phoenix ,

She that doth fast till you come home to dinner.

And prays that you will hie you home to dinner 90

*Ant. S.* What, wilt thou flout me thus unto my face.  
Being forbid ? There, take you that, sir knave.

*Dro. E.* What mean you, sir ? for God's sake, hold  
your hands ?

Nay, an you will not, sir, I'll take my heels. [*Exit*

*Ant. S.* Upon my life, by some device or other 95  
The villain is o'erraught of all my money.

They say this town is full of cozenage .

As, nimble jugglers that deceive the eye,

them. And if I were to return all these marks in kind, surely you would  
not bear with me very patiently then ' .

*Ant. S.*—What mistress are you talking of, you slave ?

*Dro. E.*—Well, it is my mistress, who lives at the Phoenix and who is  
your worship's wife ; it is she that is waiting for you now to come home  
to dinner and who prays that you will 'hasten home' for this dinner

*Ant. S.*—What, will you still persist in jesting when I have asked  
you not to do so ? Well, then, take that for your pains ' (*Beats*  
*Dro. E.*)

*Dro. E.*—What do you mean by beating me, Sir ? Hold your hands  
for God's sake ; and if you won't do so, I shall take to my heels

(*Dro. E.* runs away)

*Ant. S.*—Upon my life, I am afraid that, by some trick or other,  
this rogue has been cheated of all my money. They say that this  
town is full of all sorts of tricks and tricksters—clever jugglers that  
deceive the eye, evil magicians who can change the mind, terrible

Dark- working sorcerers that change the mind,  
 Soul-killing witches that deform the body, 100  
 Disguised cheaters, prating mountebanks,  
 And many such-like liberties of sin.  
 If it prove so, I will be gone the sooner.  
 I 'll to the Centaur, to go seek this slave :  
 I greatly fear my money is not safe. [ *Exit.* 105

## ACT II.

SCENE I. *The house of ANTIPHOLUS of Ephesus**Enter ADRIANA and LUCIANA*

*Adr.* Neither my husband nor the slave return'd,  
 That in such haste I sent to seek his master !  
 Sure, Luciana, it is two o'clock.

*Luc.* Perhaps some merchant hath invited him,  
 And from the mart he's somewhere gone to dinner.  
 Good sister, let us dine, and never fret .

A man is master of his liberty :

witches that can distort the body, disguised cheats, glib and talkative quacks, and other licensed offenders\* of the same sort. If this be really the case then I shall get away from the place all the sooner. Meanwhile, I must go to the inn in order to find out my slave again ; (but) I am very much afraid that my money is lost."

## ACT II.

SCENE I.

*Adriana*—How is it that neither of them has yet come back, though I sent the servant in such haste to look for his master ? Surely, Luciana, it must be 2 o'clock now.

*Luc.*—Perhaps he has been invited by some merchant and has gone straight from the Exchange to dinner. Good sister, let us finish dinner and don't vex yourself over much about these things. Surely, a man is full master of his actions. Besides, men are very much

---

\* People who are authorized to commit sin, as it were.

Time is their master ; and, when they see time,  
They'll go or come : if so, be patient, sister.

*Adr.* Why should their liberty than ours be more ? 10

*Luc.* Because their business still lies out o' door.

*Adr.* Look, when I serve him so, he takes it ill.

*Luc.* O, know he is the bridle of your will.

*Adr.* There's none but asses will be bridled so.

*Luc.* Why, headstrong liberty is lash'd with woe. 15

There's nothing situate under heaven's eye

But hath his bound, in earth, in sea, in sky .

The beasts, the fishes, and the winged fowls,

Are their males, subjects and at their controls

Men, more divine, the masters of all these, 20

at the mercy of time, and they will come or go as time may suit. Therefore, sister, have patience.

*Adriana*—Why should men have greater liberty of action than we women enjoy ?

*Luciana*—Because their business always lies out of doors.

*Adriana*—If I treated him as he treats me, he would be sure to resent it. In other words, he would be offended if I failed to keep my engagement with him as he has failed to keep his with me.)

*Luciana*—That is so ; but know that your will (as the will of a woman and a wife) must be always checked and controlled by his desires.

*Adriana*—It is only fools who will consent to be thus checked and controlled.

*Luciana*—Ah, but the person that will not be checked or controlled suffers from manifold woes. There is nothing existing in this world—be it in earth, sea or sky—that is not subject to some sort of check or restraint. Even among beasts, fishes and birds, the females are subject to the rule and supremacy of the males. And men—who are endowed with intellect and soul, who are greater and more distinguished than fishes

Lords of the wide world and wild watery seas,  
 Indued with intellectual sense and souls,  
 Of more pre-eminence than fish and fowls,  
 Are masters to their females, and their lords  
 Then, let your will attend on their accords.

25

*Adr.* This servitude makes you to keep unwed

*Luc.* Not this, but troubles of the marriage-bed.

*Adr.* But, were you wedded, you would bear some sway

*Luc.* Ere I learn love, I'll practise to obey.

*Adr.* How if your husband start some other where ?

30

*Luc.* Till he come home again, I would forbear.

\*

*Adr.* Patience unmoved ! no marvel though she pause

They can be meek that have no other cause

A wretched soul, bruised with adversity,

We bid be quiet when we hear it cry,

35

and birds, who, in fact, are masters over these and lords of the wide world—these men, surely, must be lords and masters of their females too. And such being the case, see that your desires may always agree with their wishes.

*Adriana*—It is this servility of spirit which keeps you unmarried.

*Luciana*—Ah, not that but thought of the inevitable troubles of the married state.

*Adriana*—But when you are married, surely you would wish to exercise some control over your husband ?

*Luciana*—Nay, I would learn to obey before I fell in love or married.

*Adriana*—But what will you do if your husband bestows his affection upon somebody else ?

*Luciana*—I would forbear to reproach him till he returned and explained the matter to me.

*Adriana*—Here, surely, is an embodiment of unspeakable patience ! But those who have no cause to be angry can surely afford to be meek ! When some wretch, suffering sore from misfortune, begins

But were we burden'd with like weight of pain,  
 As much, or more, we should ourselves complain :  
 So thou, that hast no unkind mate to grieve thee,  
 With urging helpless patience wouldst relieve me ,  
 But, if thou live to see like right bereft, 40  
 'Tis fool-begg'd patience in thee will be left .

*Luc.* Well, I will marry one day, but to try.  
 Here comes your man , now is your husband nigh

*Enter DROMIO of Ephesus.*

*Adr* Say, is your tardy master now at hand ?

*Dro. E.* Nay, he's at two hands with me, and that 45  
 my two ears can witness.

to weep. We seek to pacify him and ask him to keep quiet but we ourselves begin to complain equally loudly when we suffer from a similar load of misery. Similarly, you ply me with your counsels of patience and self-control simply because you have no cruel husband to vex your spirit. But, if you live to be deserted by your husband like myself, then this patience which makes you look like a fool or an idiot will desert you completely !

*Luciana*—Well, then, I shall marry some day or other just for the sake of experiment. Meanwhile, here comes your servant. So your husband also must be near.

(Dromio of Ephesus enters.)

*Luciana*—Tell me, is your lagging master now near ? (Is he at hand ?)

*Dro. E.*—Nay, not to speak of being *at hand*, he has been *at two hands* with me (in other words, he has been beating me with both his hands) \* and my two ears can bear witness to his blows.\*

\* Mark the verbal pun in the expressions—'at hand' and 'at two hands'.  
*At hand*—near ; and *he is at two hands*—he has been beating me with both his hands.

*Adr.* Say, diſt thou ſpeak with him ? know'ſt thou his mind ?

*Dro. E.* Ay, ay ; he told his mind upon mine ear .  
Beſhrew his hand, I ſcarce could underſtand it.

*Luc.* Spake he ſo doubtfully thou couldſt not feel his meaning ? 50

*Dro. E.* Nay, he ſtruck ſo plainly, I could too well feel his blows ; and withal ſo doubtfully, that I could ſcarce underſtand them.

*Adr.* But ſay, I prithee, is he coming home ? It ſeems he hath great care to pleaſe his wife. 55

*Dro. E.* Why, miſtreſs, ſure my maſter is horn-mad

*Adr.* Horn-mad, thou villain !

*Adriana*—But did you ſpeak to him ? Do you know what he means ?

*Dro. E.*—Yes, yes, he made his meaning quite clear upon my ears . But, curſe upon his hands ! I could ſcarce underſtand what he meant . \*

*Adriana*—Did he ſpeak ſo vaguely that you could not gueſs at his meaning (could not feel his meaning ?)

*Dro. E.*—Nay, he ſtruck me ſo plainly that I felt his meaning all right . But his action was ſo ſtrange that I hardly underſtood its meaning

*Adriana*—But is he coming home ? Please tell me that . It ſeems that he thinks it a great trouble to pleaſe his wife

*Dro. E.*—Why, miſtreſs, ſurely my maſter has gone clean mad (horn-mad) !

*Adriana*—You rogue, do you venture to ſay that he is horn-mad ?†

\* ‘He made his meaning clear, but I didn't underſtand what he meant.’

† To underſtand the point of *Adriana's* reproach we muſt remember that the expreſſion *horn-mad* would mean ‘cuckold’, i. e. a man whoſe wife is unchaſte. (Cf. ‘A horned man is a monſter and a beaſt’.) Thus *Adriana* takes the expreſſion as an imputation upon her chaſtity ; but of course no ſuch offence was meant

*Dro E.* I mean not cuckold-mad .

But, sure, he is stark mad.

When I desired him to come home to dinner, 60

He ask'd me for a thousand marks in gold

'Tis dinner-time,' quoth I , 'My gold !' quoth he

'Your meat doth burn.' quoth I ; 'My gold !' quoth he

'Will you come home ?' quoth I ; 'My gold !' quoth he 65

Where is the thousand marks I gave thee, villain ?

'The pig,' quoth I, 'is burn'd' ; 'my gold !' quoth he

'My mistress, sir,' quoth I , 'Hang up thy mistress '

I know thy mistress not , out on thy mistress !

*Iu.* Quoth wife ?

*Dro E.* Quoth my master . 70

'I know,' quoth he, 'no house, no wife, no mistress '

So that my errand, duc unto my tongue,

*Dro. E.*—Nay, I do not mean that he is a cuckold, but only that he has gone stark, staring mad. When I asked him to come home to dinner, he began demanding from me a thousand marks in gold . I said that it was dinner time , he only replied—'where is my gold ?' I said,—'your meat is burning on the oven' and he only said—'My gold, where is it ?' I asked, 'will you come home'—but his only reply was—'where is my gold—where is the 1000 marks that I gave you, you rogue ?' I then I said, 'my mistress'—; and he only replied 'hang your mistress. I don't know any such person, out upon her !'

*Luciana.*—Who is it that said so ?

*Dro. E.*—It was my master who said so. He said 'I know of no house, no wife and no mistress'. Therewith—thanks to him—he gave me to bear upon my shoulders the message which I ought



I thank him, I bare home upon my shoulders :

For, in conclusion; he did beat me there.

*Adr.* Go back again, thou slave, and fetch him home. 75

*Dro. E.* Go back again, and be new beaten home ?

For God's sake, send some other messenger.

*Adr.* Back, slave, or I will break thy pate across.

*Dro. E.* And he will bless that cross with other  
beating .

Between you I shall have a holy head.

80

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properly to have carried upon my tongue , \* for, to sum up the whole matter—he beat and drove me away from the place

*Adriana*

*Dro. E.*—Shall I have to go again and receive a fresh beating once more ? For God's sake entrust your message to somebody else

*Adriana*—Go back, you slave, or I will quite break your head across

*Dro. E.*—You say that you will break my head across† ; and he, your husband, will sanctify that cross still further by beating me again. Thus, between you two, my head is going to be quite a holy one.

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\* The idea is this . ‘He ought properly to have given me a message by word of mouth which I could have delivered to you with my tongue. But as a matter of fact, the only message which he gave me was a good drubbing upon my head so that, instead of carrying his message upon my tongue, I carry it upon my shoulders’.

† Mark the verbal quibble on the words ‘cross’ and ‘across’. The reference in the whole passage is to the old Roman Catholic practice of blessing by making the sign of the cross; and also of pronouncing a blessing upon every sign of the cross. Dromio’s meaning may be thus fully expressed ; “You say that you will cross my head with your blows ; and of course my head will be blessed if you thus make the mark of a cross upon it. And then your husband, finding this cross upon my head, will bless it again with a fresh dose of beating. Thus my head will be twice blessed, once by you and once by him ; and this double blessing will make it quite holy.”

*Adr.* Hence, prating peasant ! fetch thy master home.

*Dro. E.* Am I so round with you as you with me,  
That like a football you do spurn me thus ?  
You spurn me hence, and he will spurn me hither\*.  
If I last in this service, you must case me in leather. [*Exit.* 85

*Luc.* Fie, how impatience loureth in your face !

*Adr.* His company must do his minions grace,  
Whilst I at home starve for a merry look.  
Hath homely age the alluring beauty took  
From my poor cheek ? then he hath wasted it 90  
Are my discourses dull ? barren my wit ?

*Adriana*—Hence, you talkative fool, go and bring your master home

*Dro. E.*—You are round (i. e., very short and brusque) with me. But am I equally round that you kick me about in this way as if I were a football\* You kick me away hence, and he will again kick me back hither ; and you will have to case me in leather (just as people case foot-balls in leather) if I survive this constant kicking and cuffing

(Dromio goes away)

*Luciana*—Fie, how angry and impatient you look !

*Adriana*—He must be making merry with his women-lavours—must he ;—while I pine at home for the absence of one kind or pleasant look ! Has old age robbed my cheek of its beauty ? Then it is he who has worked this mischief. Has my wit become barren and my conversation dull ? Well, it is unkindness harder than

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\* Notice the double sense in *round*, meaning (1) cut, brusque, and (2) circular, of a round shape. Dromio's meaning can be thus given. 'You kick me about as if I were a football. But am I round or globular that you mistake me for a football ?—No doubt, you are round (brusque) with me ; but am I equally round (spherical) that you thus mistake me for a very foot-ball ?'

If voluble and sharp discourse be marr'd,  
 Unkindness blunts it more than marble hard .  
 Do their gay vestments his affections bait ?  
 That's not my fault ; he's master of my state 95  
 What ruins are in me that can be found  
 By him not ruin'd ? then is he the ground  
 Of my defeatures. My decayed fair  
 A sunny look of his would soon repair :  
 But, too unruly deer, he breaks the pale 100  
 And feeds from home ; poor I am but his stale.  
*Luc.* Self-harming jealousy ! fie, beat it hence !  
*Adr.* Unfeeling fools can with such wrongs dispense.  
 I know his eye doth homage elsewhere ;  
 Or else what lets it but he would be here ? 105  
 Sister, you know he promised me a chain ;

marble which blunts the quickness of discourse. Is he tempted by the gaudy attire of these women ? Well, it is no fault of mine that I cannot be dressed equally gorgeously, for he is the master of my property. In short, if there is any waste or defect in me, it is he who is the author of such waste and desolation ; and one kind and pleasant look from him would repair all my loss of beauty. But like the wild and wanton stage \* he overleaps the boundary-wall and strays away to graze far from home, while I serve only as his stalking horse under cover of which he pursues his licentious amours.

*Lisiana*—Well, this unreasoning jealousy harms only yourself. Fie, chase it away from your heart.

*Adriana*—It is only callous and unfeeling fools who can put up with such injuries. I know that my husband worships the beauty of other women ; or else what is it that prevents him from coming here ? Sister, you know that he promised to give me a chain : but

\* Mark the play of words—*Deer* meaning 'dear' (precious) as well as 'stag.'

Would that alone, alone he would detain,  
 So he would keep fair quarter with his bed }  
 I see the jewel best enamelled  
 Will lose his beauty ; yet the gold bides still 110  
 That others touch, and often touching will  
 Wear gold , and so no man, that hath a name,  
 By falsehood and corruption doth it shame.  
 Since that my beauty cannot please his eye.  
 I'll weep what's left away, and weeping die. 115

I should be quite willing that he should keep back this chain from me, if only he acted fairly towards me as wife (But, see how things stand). The jewel best enamelled (for instance, some gold ring well varnished with enamel) may lose its beauty, viz when the enamel wears off ; but (in spite of the wearing off of the enamel) the gold remains gold, though no doubt it may be tarnished by constant handling.\* Similarly, men when they have once acquired a reputation do not altogether lose that reputation, however much their character may receive a stain. Such being the case—since my husband cannot lose his reputation as a man while my beauty daily grows distasteful to him—what else can I do but weep away this life of mine.

\* The idea in this condensed and obscure simile can be thus expressed—Adriana is here thinking of some beautiful piece of jewellery like a gold ring brightly enamelled. The enamel will wear off in time and the gold itself may be tarnished by frequent handling ; but still the gold remains gold—does not wholly diminish in value. Similarly, when a man has once established a solid reputation for virtue, he may come to be mixed up with women and his character may receive a stain ; and yet he does not altogether lose his reputation.—And so thinking, Adriana thus applies the moral in her own case. 'My husband's reputation is well established. So, however loose his character may have now become, he will never altogether lose his reputation. With me however it is different, for I shall be daily losing my beauty with the advance of years. The match between us being thus unequal—he never losing his reputation and I daily losing my beauty—what else can I do but weep and die ?

*Luc.* How many fond fools serve mad jealousy !

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A public place.*

*Enter* ANTIPHOLUS of Syracuse.

*Ant S.* The gold I gave to Dromio is laid up  
Safe at the Centaur ; and the heedful slave  
Is wander'd forth, in care to seek me out  
By computation and mine host's report.  
I could not speak with Dromio since at first 5  
I sent him from the mart. See, here he comes.

*Enter* DROMIO of Syracuse.

How now, sir ! is your merry humour alter'd ?

*Luciana*—What fools there are in this world, who (deliberately and yet couselessly) keep alive the mad passion of jealousy !

SCENE 2<sup>d</sup>

*Ant S.*—The money which I entrusted with Dromio was safely deposited by him at the inn ; and now the poor, faithful fellow has gone forth in order to find me out if he can, by following the host's direction and his own sense of reckoning. I had no proper speech with him since I first despatched him from the exchange with the money ;\* but look, here he comes.

[*Dromio of Syracuse enters.*]

How now, sir, has your jesting mood departed ? Jest with me

\* *Ant S.* means that when he saw Dromio last, he got so angry at the man's untimely jests (as they seemed to him) that he drove him away and had no time to hold any rational talk with him. (As a matter of fact, of course; he had not seen his own servant at all, and had only seen Dromio E.)

As you love strokes, so jest me again.

You know no Centaur? you received no gold?

Your mistress sent to have me home to dinner? 10

My house was at the Phoenix; Wast thou mad,

That thus so madly thou didst answer me?

*Dro. S.* What answer, sir? when spake I such a word?

*Ant. S.* Even now, even here, not half an hour since

*Dro. S.* I did not see you since you sent me hence 15  
Home to the Centaur, with the gold you gave me.

*Ant. S.* Villain, thou didst deny the gold's receipt,

And told'st me of a mistress, and a dinner,

For which, I hope, thou felt'st. I was displeased.

*Dro. S.* I am glad to see you in this merry vein 20  
What means this jest? I pray you, master, tell me.

*Ant. S.* Yea, dost thou jeer, and flout me in the teeth?

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again if only you care to have more blows. You do not know any such man as the Centaur, don't you? You received no gold from me, didn't you? And your mistress sent you to invite me to dinner—did she? And my house is at the Phoenix, is it? Why, fellow, had you gone mad that you talked so madly with me?

*Dro. S.*—What is it that you are saying, sir? When did I address these remarks to you?

*Ant. S.*—Why, at this very place—only now, and at this very place—not even half an hour ago!

*Dro. S.*—Why, sir, I never saw you since you sent me to the Centaur with the gold which you had entrusted to my care.

*Ant. S.*—Villain, you even denied having received any gold from me! And you were talking to me about a mistress, about dinner and what's not? But I hope you perceived that you had offended me seriously.

*Dro. S.*—Master, I am glad that you are in a jesting mood. But what is the meaning of this joke? Please tell me that.

*Ant. S.*—Yea, but you laugh at me and taunt me even now! Do

'Think'st thou I jest ? Hold, take thou that, and that.

[*Beating him.*

*Dro. S.* Hold, sir, for God's sake ! now your jest is earnest :

Upon what bargain do you give it me ? 25

*Ant. S.* Because that I familiarly sometimes

Do use you for my fool and chat with you,

Your sauciness will jest upon my love

And make a common of my serious hours.

When the sun shines let foolish gnats make sport, 30

But creep in crannies when he hides his beams.

If you will jest with me, know my aspect,

And fashion your demeanour to my looks,

Or I will beat this method in your scone.

you think that I am jesting till ? Well, then, take that for your pains !  
(*Beats him.*)

*Dro. S.*—Stop sir, for God's sake, stop. Now I find that your jest is really turning into earnest. But what is this earnest \* for ? What do you want me to give in return ?

*Ant. S.*—Because I use you as my fool and talk and gossip with you on familiar terms, do you grow so impertinent as to trifle with me during hours of seriousness ? Let gnats come out when it is sunshine ; but let them hide themselves when the sun obscures its beams. Similarly, if you want to jest with me, you must consult my moods ; you must fashion your manner so as to be in harmony with my appearance ; or I will drive this lesson home into your head by beating.

\* Mark the the pun upon the word *earnest*, meaning (1) serious, as well as (2) earnest-money, money paid as advance in expectation of work to be done. Dromio's meaning can be thus given : 'You' have given me earnest, viz. in the shape of this beating ; but what do you want me to do in return for this advance-payment ?'

*Dro. S.* Sconce, call you it ? so you would leave 35  
battering, I had rather have it a head ; ah you use these blows  
long, I must get a sconce for my head and insconce it too ; or  
else I shall seek my wit in my shoulders. ) But, I pray, sir, why  
am I beaten ?

*Ant. S.* Dost thou not know ? 40

*Dro. S.* Nothing, sir, but that I am beaten.

*Ant. S.* Shall I tell you why ?

*Dro. S.* Ay, sir, and wherefore ; for, they say, every why  
hath a wherefore.

*Ant. S.* Why, first,—for flouting me : and then, where-  
fore,— 45

For urging it the second time to me.

*Dro. S.*—Do you call my head a sconce ?\* (And is it therefore that  
you keep battering at it ? ) But I should be quite glad to have it called  
a head if only you gave up your hammering. However, if you persist  
in these blows, then I ought to procure a helmet for my head and cast it  
in that. Or the time will soon come when I shall have to seek my wit  
in my shoulders.\*

*Ant. S.*—Don't you know the reason ?

*Dro. S.*—Not in the least, sir, excepting only that I am beaten.

*Ant. S.* ..

*Dro. S.*—Ah, sir, but you must not only give me the why but  
also the wherefore ; for, as the proverb runs, every why must have  
its wherefore.

*Ant. S.*—Well, then, as for the why—I beat you for jesting with me  
and as for wherefore—I beat you for repeating the jest.

\* Sconce means a round-shaped fort ; and hence the point of Dromio's  
jest. 'Evidently you take my head for a sconce, and it is therefore that  
you keep hammering at it. [Note that there is not a double but a triple  
meaning in *sconce* (1) Head ; (2) fort ; (3) helmet.]

† The point of the jest can be thus given. 'Generally speaking, a man's  
wit lies in his head. But from the way in which you are going on, I am  
soon likely to lose my head ; and then I shall have to seek my wit in my  
shoulders.'



*Dro. S.* Was there ever any man thus beaten out of season,

When in the why and the wherefore is neither rhyme nor reason?

Well, Sir, I thank you.

*Ant. S.* Thank me, sir! for what? 50

*Dro. S.* marry, sir, for this something that you gave me for nothing.

*Ant. S.* I'll make you amends next, to give you nothing for something. But say, sir, is it dinner-time?

*Dro. S.* No, sir: I think the meat wants that I have. 55

*Ant. S.* In good time, sir; what's that?

*Dro. S.* Basting.

*Ant. S.* Well, sir, then 't will be dry.

*Dro. S.*—(Speaking aloud to himself) Was ever any man beaten more causelessly before—seeing that there is no reason in the two reasons that my master has given me! (To *Ant. S.*) Well, sir, I must thank you

*Ant. S.*

*Dro. S.*—Why, I must thank you for giving me something in return for nothing.\*

*Ant. S.*—well, if that that be so, then I shall compensate for it next time, viz. by giving you nothing for something—by giving you nothing when you happen to do something for me. Meanwhile, sir, is it yet time for dinner, as you were saying a little while ago?

*Dro. S.*—No sir, the meat has not got what I have.

*Ant. S.*—Well, the meat will have it in good time, sure enough. Meanwhile, what is this thing?

*Dro. S.*—Why, it is basting.

*Ant. S.*—Well, if the meat has not been basted, then it will be dry meat.

\* You have beaten me, and that is something. But you have beaten me for nothing, and thus you have given me something for nothing.

*Dro. S.* If it be, sir, I pray you, eat none of it.

*Ant. S.* Yqur reason ? 60

*Dro. S.* Lest it make you cholerick and purchase me another dry basting. *he . eat . it .*

*Ant. S.* Well, sir, learn to jest in good time : there's a time for all things.

*Dro. S.* I durst have denied that, before you were 65 so cholerick.

*Ant. S.* By what rule, sir ?

*Dro. S.* Marry, sir, by a rule as plain as the plain bald pate of father Time himself.

*Ant. S.* Let's hear it. 70

*Dro. S.* Therefore, sir, it is all the more reason that you should not eat it.

*Ant. S.* Why so ?

*Dro. S.* Because, if you eat dry meat, it will make you more cholerick still, and thus procure for me a dose of dry beating.\*

*Ant. S.* Well, sir, henceforth learn to jest only at the proper time, remember that there is a time for all things.

*Dro. S.* Well, sir, if you had been less cholerick than you now are, I should have denied your proposition.

*Ant. S.* Upon what ground, sir ?

*Dro. S.* Well, for a reason as plain as the plain, bald head of time itself. †

*Ant. S.* Let us hear the reason then.

\* Properly speaking, 'dry beating' would be beating without bloodshed.

† Time used to be conventionally represented as an old man having a bald head with only a tuft of hair in front. The allusion to time's baldness is introduced in order to lead on to the jest which Dromio is preparing. *Ant. S.* had said that there was a time for all things ; but Dromio will presently reply that there was no time for one thing, *viz.* for a bald man to grow hair again. And it is to lead on to this jest about baldness that he makes mention of the bald head of time.

*Dro. S.* There's no time for a man to recover his hair that grows bald by nature.

*Ant. S.* May he not do it by fine and recovery?

*Dro. S.* Yes, to pay a fine for a periwig and recover the lost hair of another man. 75

*Ant. S.* Why is time such a niggard of hair, being, as it is, so plentiful an excrement?

*Dro. S.* Because it is a blessing that he bestows on beasts; and what he hath scantied men in hair he hath given them in wit. 80

*Dro. S.* Well, sir, there is no time for a bald man to recover his hair (to grow his hair again.)

*Ant. S.* But can he not do this by the legal process of fine and recovery?\*

*Dro. S.* Yes, he can do so in some sort by the process of fine and recovery. Let him pay the fine by purchasing a periwig, and then recover his head with another man's hair.

*Ant. S.* (Introducing a new topic of conversation) How is it that time is so miserly in the bestowal of hair, seeing that hair grows so plentifully in the world?

*Dro. S.* Why, that is because hair is a blessing which is specially reserved for beasts. And as for men, if time gives them little of hair, he makes up for it by giving them plenty of wit.† (In other words, if people grow bald with the advance of years, they grow wiser at the same time.)

\* It would require some knowledge of legal process in order to understand the point of this jest. Formerly, in England, it was difficult to effect conveyance of land owing to the strict rule of entail; but such conveyance could be effected by the fictitious legal process of fine and recovery; and the reference here is to that. 'It is difficult to make a conveyance of land in England. But since fine and recovery can help us to accomplish this difficult work—can it not help us also to grow hair on a bald head?'

† Dromio thus seems to imply that 'hair' and 'wit' stand in inverse ratio to each other; and this explains the point of *Ant. S.*'s next speech.

*Ant. S.* Why, but there's many a man hath more hair than wit.

*Dro. S.* Not a man of those but he hath the wit to lose his hair.

*Ant. S.* Why, thou didst conclude hairy men plain dealers without wit. 85

*Dro. S.* The plainer dealer, the sooner lost yet he loseth it in a kind of policy.

*Ant. S.* For what reason ?

*Dro. S.* For two ; and sound ones too. 90

*Ant. S.* Nay, not sound, I pray you.

*Dro. S.* Sure ones then.

*Ant. S.* (Do you mean to say that men have more wit than hair ?) And yet there are many people who have more hair than wit \*

*Dro. S.* O, but all these people have wit enough to lose their hair as they grow old !\*

*Ant. S.* Do you then conclude that hairy people must be blunt, plain-dealing men without wit ?

*Dro. S.* Well, if they are *plain* dealers,† then they must lose their hair soon. But jesting apart, when people lose their hair, they do it with a purpose.

*Ant. S.* What is their purpose then ?

*Dro. S.* As a matter of fact there are two reasons ; and both of them are sound.

*Ant. S.* Nay, don't speak of sound reasons, I pray.

*Dro. S.* Well then, the reasons are sure.

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\* Even if they have more hair than wit at the outset, they are wise enough to lose their hair as they grow old.

† The point of the jest lies in the fact that a bald head is a plain, smooth head. Dromio's meaning can be thus given : 'You are speaking about plain people. Now if your people are really plain, then it means that they have lost their hair, and thus have got a plain, smooth head.'

*Ant. S.* Nay, not sure, in a thing falsing.❶

*Dro. S.* Certain ones then.

*Ant. S.* Name them.

95

*Dro. S.* The one, to save the money that he spends in tiring; the other, that at dinner they should not drop in his porridge. . . .

*Ant. S.* You would all this time have proved there is no time for all things.

100

*Dro. S.* Marry, and did, sir; namely, no time to recover hair lost by nature.

*Ant. S.* But your reason was not substantial, why there is no time to recover.

*Dro. S.* Thus I mend it: Time himself is bald and 105 therefore, to the world's end, will have bald followers.

*Ant. S.* Nay, nay, don't speak of sure reasons in connection with a thing so essentially false.

*Dro. S.* Well then, the reasons are certain.

*Ant. S.* Name your reasons then.

*Dro. S.* One reason is that they lose their hair in order that they may save the money which would be otherwise lost in hair-dressing. The other is, they lose their hair in order that it may not drop into their porridge when they eat.

*Ant. S.* You have been saying all this to prove that there is no reason for all things.

*Dro. S.* Yes, sir, and I have proved it already. I have proved that there is no time to recover hair in a bald head.

*Ant. S.* But you have given no substantial reason as to why there is no time for it.

*Dro. S.* Well then, I make up my deficiency thus: Time himself is bald and therefore always wishes to have a lot of bald followers.\*

\* Dromio's idea is this:—Time wishes to have bald followers, and therefore bald people are prevented from growing their hair again. ❶

*Ant. S.* I know 'twould be a bald conclusion.  
But, soft, who wafts us yonder ?

*Enter ADRIANA and LUCIANA.*

*Adr.* Ay, ay, Antipholus, look strange and frown :  
Some other mistress hath thy sweet aspects . 110  
I am not Adriana nor thy wife.  
The time was once when thou unurged wouldst vow  
That never words were music to thine ear,  
That never object pleasing in thine eye,  
That never touch well welcome to thy hand, 115  
That never meat sweet-savour'd in thy taste,  
Unless I spake, look'd, touch'd, or carved to thee.  
How comes it now, my husband, O, how comes it,  
That thou art thus estranged from thyself ?  
Thyself I call it, being strange to me, 120  
That, undividable, incorporate,  
Am better than thy dear self's better part.

*Ant. S.* I knew that you would arrive at some such sorry conclusion as this ; but, hush, who are these people that beckon to us from over there ?

[ Adriana and Luciana enter ]

*Adriana*—Ay, ay, Antipholus, you frown and look as if you know nothing about us. Apparently all your sweetness is reserved for some other woman, and towards me you behave as if I were neither Adriana nor your wife. Time was when, without entreaty on my part, you would say that no words were sweet unless they were spoken by me, that no objects were pleasing unless they were seen through my eyes, that no touch was welcome unless the touch came from me, and that no meat tasted sweet to you unless, it had been carved by be. How comes it then, O my husband, that you have now become so much a stranger to yourself ? For to be estranged from me is to be estranged from yourself, seeing that I form one, undivided whole with you and am indeed the better part of your being ! Ah, do

Ah, do not tear away thyself from me !  
 For know, my love; as easy mayst thou fall  
 A drop of water in the breaking gulf, 125  
 And take unmingled thence that drop again,  
 Without addition or diminishing,  
 As take from me thyself and not me too.  
 'How dearly would it touch thee to the quick.  
 Shouldst thou but hear I were licentious, 130  
 And that this body, consecrate to thee,  
 By ruffian lust should be contaminate !  
 Wouldst thou not spit at me and spurn at me,  
 And hurl the name of husband in my face,  
 And tear the stain'd skin off my harlot-brow, 135  
 And from my false hand cut the wedding-ring,  
 And break it with a deep-divorcing vow ?  
 I know thou canst ; and therefore, see thou do it.

not seek to tear yourself away from me ; nay, you cannot do so, for, just as when a man has let fall a drop of water into the rolling sea, he cannot hope to pick it up again exactly in the condition in which it before was, so, when a man has been married, he can never be exactly what he had been before\*. If you were to hear that I had grown licentious, that this body sacred to yourself had been touched by the contagion of lust, would not this knowledge pain and grieve you to the quick ? Would you not despise me utterly thenceforth, fling back the name of husband in my teeth, pluck off my vile skin from my shameless brow, tear off the wedding-ring from my finger, and break it with deep and emphatic vows of divorce ? I know that you are capable of behaving like this ; and therefore, be prepared to

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\* When a drop of water is let fall into the sea, it sinks at once and loses its individuality ; and you can never hope to pick it up again in its former condition. Similarly, when a man is married, his individuality is merged in that of another ; and it is impossible for him to regain his former condition.

I am possess'd with an adulterate blot ;  
 My blood is mingled with the grime of lust : 140  
 For, if we two be one, and thou play false,  
 I do digest the poison of thy flesh,  
 Being strumpeted by thy contagion.  
 Keep then fair league and truce with thy true bed ;  
 I live unstain'd, thou undishonoured. 145

*Ant. S.* Plead you to me, fair dame ? I know you not :  
 In Ephesus I am but two hours old,  
 As strange unto your town 'as to your talk ,  
 Who, every word by all my wit being scann'd,  
 Wants wit in all one word to understand. 150

do these things now\*. For know that I have been touched by the vile blot of licentiousness, my blood has been polluted by the filth of lust (And this is how it has happened.) Marriage has made you one with me ; and since you have proved false and impure, I too have caught your vileness of spirit, and thus the contagion of your lust has made me lustful also. Hence, if you want to avoid this shame (i. e., if you want to avoid the shame of having a harlot wife), see that you keep faith and truth with your married spouse ; and then it may be that I should live sinless and you also will live without shame.

*Ant. S.* Are you speaking to me, fair lady ? But I know nothing about you. I have been at Ephesus only for two hours, and I know nothing of your town just as I can understand nothing of your speech. In fact, if I were to concentrate all my wit in order to understand the words of your speech, even then I would be unable to understand a single word of yours.†

\* The idea is this. Since you have grown faithless to me, I also am determined to be faithless to you ; and therefore you must prepare to behave towards me as you would behave towards a harlot wife.

† The meaning is this : If I were to focus all my power of wit and understanding in order to understand your speech, even then I would not succeed in the attempt. In other words, all my wit would be insufficient for the purpose of making out your meaning.



*Luc.* Fie, brother ! how the world is changed with you !  
When were you wont to use my sister thus ?  
She sent for you by Dromio home to dinner

*Ant. S.* By Dromio ?

*Dro. S.* By me ? 155

*Adr.* By thee ; and this thou didst return from him,  
'That he did buffet thee and, in his blows,  
Denied my house for his, me for his wife.

*Ant. S.* Did you converse, sir, with this gentle woman ?  
What is the course and drift of your compact ? 160

*Dro. S.* I, sir ? I never saw her till this time.

*Ant. S.* Villain, thou liest ; for even her very words  
Didst thou deliver to me on the mart.

*Dro. S.* I never spake with her in all my life.

*Ant. S.* How can she thus then call us by our names ? 165  
Unless it be by inspiration.

*Adr.* How ill agrees it with your gravity

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*Luciana*—For shame, my brother ! How things seem to have changed  
with you ! Surely, you never used to behave thus rudely to my sister before !  
She sent Dromio to fetch you home to dinner.

*Ant. S.* . . . .

*Dro. S.* . . . .

*Adriana*—Yes, through you ! And on return you told me that he had  
beaten you and that in the midst of his blows he had said that he had  
neither home nor wife.

*Ant. S.*—Why, fellow, did you ever have any speech with this lady ? If  
no, what was the purport of your conversation ?

*Dro. S.* . . . .

*Ant. S.*—Villain, surely you lie ; for on the Exchange you repeated to  
me the very message which I now hear from her !

*Dro. S.*—But I tell you that I never saw her before.

*Ant. S.*—How then does she call us by our names, unless it were by  
means of intuition ?

*Adr.*—Surely, 'this game of mummary and make-belief wherein

'To counterfeit thus grossly with your slave,  
 Abetting him to thwart me in my mood '  
 Be it my wrong you are from me exempt, 170  
 But wrong not that wrong with a more contempt.  
 Come, I will fasten on this sleeve of thine :  
 Thou art an elm, my husband, I a vine,  
 Whose weakness, married to thy stronger state,  
 Makes me with thy strength to communicate . 175  
 If aught possess thee from me, it is dross,  
 Usurping ivy, brier, or idle moss ;  
 Who, all for want of pruning, with intrusion  
 Infect thy sap and live on thy confusion.

*Ant. S.* 'To me she speaks ; she moves me for her 180  
 theme :

What, was I married to her in my dream ?  
 Or sleep I now, and think I hear all this ?

you teach 'your servant to make a mock of me is utterly unsuitable  
 to a man of your character' It is wrong enough that you should be  
 divided from me ; but do not add insult to injury '(do not add to  
 the burden of my wrong) by holding me thus openly in contempt.  
 Come, let me tie up this sleeve of yours. You, my husband, are like  
 a stately elm while I am like a clinging vine ; and just as the vine  
 clings to the elm for support, so I seek to derive strength from being  
 married to you. If anything tempts you away from my side, know  
 that she must be a most vile and worthless creature. Just as vile,  
 worthless plants like the ivy, brier or moss sometimes push out the  
 vine from the trunk of the elm, and just as these idle, intrusive plants  
 —not being pruned in due time—eat up the sap of the elm and  
 contribute to its ruin, so the vile, idle woman who tempts you away  
 from my side will suck up your substance and contribute to your  
 downfall.

' *Ant. S.*—It is I to whom she talks, and it is I who am the subject  
 of her speech. Must I (then) believe that I was married to her in a  
 dream ? Or must I think that I am sleeping now and that all this

What error drives our eyes and ears amiss ?

Until I know this 'sure uncertainty ,

I 'll entertain the offer'd fallacy. 185

*Luc.* Dromio, go bid the servants spread for dinner.

*Dro.* S. O, for my beads ! I cross me for a sinner.

'This is the fairy land : O, spite of spites !

We talk with fairies, goblins, elves, and sprites

If we obey them not, this will ensue, 190

They 'll suck our breath or pinch us black and blue

*Luc.* Why pratest thou to thyself and answer'st not ?

Dromio, thou drone, thou snail, thou slug, thou sot !

*Dro.* S. I am transformed, master, am I not ?

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so-called dialogue is taking place in a dream ? What fantastic error must it be which thus deceives my senses ! But till my doubts are resolved on this point, I must even accept this error as truth. \*

\* *Luciana*—Dromio, ask the servants to lay the table for dinner.

*Dro.* S.—O that I had my string of beads with which to say my prayers ! Sinner as I am, I must make the sign of the cross ; for surely we are in a fairy land, and O cursed fortune, we are talking with fancies, juggling elves and spirits. We must obey them ; for if we do not, they will suck out our breath or pinch us hard.

*Luciana*—Why do you keep muttering to yourself ? why don't you answer me promptly, Dromio—thou fool, thou sluggard, thou drunken knave !

*Dro.* S.—Surely, my master, I must have been totally changed

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\* The idea is this. The whole thing seems to me like a dream ; but so long as the dream lasts, so long as my doubts are not fully resolved, I must fall in with the humour of the game.—In other words, I must indulge this poor woman in this strange hallucination of hers.

*Ant. S.* I think thou art in mind, and so am I. 195

*Dro. S.* Nay, master, both in mind and in my shape

*Ant. S.* Thou hast thine own form.

*Dro. S.* No, I am an ape.

*Luc.* If thou art changed to aught, 'tis to an ass

*Dro. S.* 'Tis true, she rides me and I long for grass 200  
'Tis so, I am an ass ; else it could never be

But I should know her as well as she knows me

*Adr.* Come, come ; no longer will I be a fool,  
'To put the finger in the eye and weep,  
Whilst man and master laugh my woes to scorn 205  
Come, sir, to dinner. Dromio, keep the gate.

*Ant. S.*—I think that both you and I have been changed in spirit

*Dro. S.*—Nay, master, it is not simply in spirit ; we must have been changed both body and mind.

*Ant. S.*—No, you can't have been changed in body ; you still retain your original from.

*Dro. S.*—No, no, it can't be so ; I must have been changed into an ape.

*Luciana*—If you are changed into anything you are changed into an ass

*Dro. S.*—(As if he has made a triumphant discovery) *That must be the truth !* I am an ass, you ride me, and I long to eat grass *That must be so indeed : I must have been changed into an ass ; otherwise, I should have known her as surely as she knows me.*

*Adriana*—Come, come ; seeing that these persons—both master and man—persist in laughing at me, I shall not be such a fool as to put finger in my eyes and weep.\* (*Addressing Ant. S.*) Come, sir, let us proceed to dinner. (*Addressing Dromio*) You, Dromio, will act as porter at the

\* Seeing that they are bent upon making a mock of me I am not going to weep for them.

Husband, I'll dine above with you to-day,  
 And shrieve you of a thousand idle pranks.  
 Sirrah, if any ask you for your master,  
 Say he dines forth, and let no creature enter. 210  
 Come, sister. Dromio, play the porter well.

*Ant. S.* Am I in earth, in heaven, or in hell ?  
 Sleeping or waking ? mad or well-advised ?  
 Known unto these, and to myself disguised !  
 I'll say as they say and persevere so, 215  
 And in this mist at all adventures go.

*Dro. S.* Master, shall I be ported at the gate ?

*Adr.* Ay ; and let none enter, lest I break your pate.

*Luc.* Come, come, Antipholus ; we dine too late.

[*Exeunt*

gate—Husband, you must dine upstairs in my company ; and I will make you confess all the faults that you have committed. (*Again turneth to Dromio*) Sirrah, if anybody calls for your master, say that he is out, that he is dining abroad, and let no one enter. Act well and strictly as a porter.

*Ant. S.*—What has happened to me ? Am I living in this earth or have I been transported to Heaven or to Hell ? Am I awake or have I fallen asleep ? Am I mad or do I possess my senses ? How is it that I am known to these persons while I am unknown to myself ? However, for the time being, I must fall in with their humour ; I must say what they say and will continue in this maze of confusion, whatever may happen to me.

*Dro. S.*—Master, shall I have to act as porter at the gate ?

*Adriana*—Yes, that you must ; and you must not let anybody enter, or I shall break your head.

*Luciana*—Come, come, Antipholus, we are already too late for dinner

## ACT III.

SCENE I. *Before the-house of* ANTIPHOLUS of Ephesus.*Enter* ANTIPHOLUS OF Ephesus, DROMIO OF Ephesus,  
ANGELO, and BALTHAZAR.

*Ant. E.* Good Signior Angelo, you must excuse us all  
 My wife is shrewish when I keep not hours :  
 Say that I linger'd with you at your shop  
 'T' to see the making of her carcanet,  
 And that to-morrow you will bring it home. 5  
 But here's a villain that would face me down  
 He met me on the mart, and that I beat him,  
 And charged him with a thousand marks in gold,  
 And that I did deny my wife and house.  
 'Thou drunkard, thou, what didst thou mean by this ? 10

*Dro. E.* Say what you will, sir, but I know what I know ;  
 'That you beat me at the mart, I have your hand to show

## ACT III. SCENE I.

[ The citizen Antipholus, his servant, Angelo the goldsmith,  
 and Balthazar the merchant, enter ]

*Ant. E.*—Good master Angelo, you will have to do me a favour, you  
 I have to explain away my delay. My wife begins to scold if I am late  
 returning, and therefore you must say that I was delayed at your shop—  
 asking you make a neckchain for her, and that to-morrow you will finish  
 the chain and bring it here.—Meanwhile, here is this rogue of mine who will  
 make me believe that I met him on the mart, that I beat him, charged him  
 with possessing a thousand marks of mine and that I denied having a wife  
 and home. You drunken fool, what do you mean by such talk ?

*Dro. E.*—You may say what you will, sir, but I know what I know.  
 I bear marks from your hand to prove that you beat me ; and if my skin

If the skin were parchment and the blows you gave were ink,  
Your own handwriting would tell you what I think.

*Ant. E.* I think thou art an ass. 15

*Dro. E.* Marry, so it doth appear.

By the wrongs I suffer, and the blows I bear.

I should kick, being kick'd ; and, being at that pass,  
You would keep from my heels and beware of an ass.

*Ant. E.* You're sad, Signior Balthazar : pray God our

cheer 20

May answer my good will and your good welcome here.

*Bal.* I hold your dainties cheap, sir, and your welcome  
dear.

were parchment and your blows were ink, then I could prove the truth of my story by your own hand-writing\*, so to say.

*Ant. S.*—Well, I think you must verily be an ass.

*Dro. S.*—So it would appear from the injury I have suffered and the blows which I had to bear. And yet there is a difference ; for if I had always been an ass, I would have kicked you when I was kicked ; and in that case, you would have to keep off from me just as people keep off from a kicking ass.

*Ant. E.*—(Turning aside to his guests) You seem to be melancholy Master Balthazar ; and in order to make you merry I wish that the quality of my dinner agreed with the warmth and cordiality of my good wishes.†

*Bal*—O sir, I care very little for your dinner but very much for your welcome !

\* The idea is this. At present I have no tangible evidence to prove the truth of my story. No doubt you gave me blows, but blows are like air and have vanished. If, however, my skin were parchment and your blows had been ink, then there would have been evidence in your own handwriting, as it were, to prove the truth of my story.

† My heart is full of welcome for you : and if the dinner is good in proportion, it will serve to cheer away your melancholy.

*Ant. E.* O Signior Balthazar, either at flesh or fish,  
A table full of welcome makes scarce one dainty dish.

*Bal.* Good meat, sir, is common; that every churl 25 /  
affords.

*Ant. E.* And welcome more common; for that's nothing  
but words.

*Bal.* Small cheer and great welcome makes a merry feast.

*Ant. E.* Ay, to a niggardly host and more sparing guest.  
But though may cates be mean, take them in good part,  
Better cheer my you have, but not with better heart. 30  
But, soft! my door is lock'd. Go bid them let us in.

*Dro. E.* Maug, Bridget, Marian, Cicely, Gillian, Ginn!

*Dro. S.* [*Within*] Mome, malt-horse, capon, coxcomb,  
idiot, patch!

*Ant. E.*—You must not say that, master Balthazar; for however full of  
welcome a table may be, that by itself would not serve to make a good  
dinner.

*Bal.*—Food, sir, even good food is a common thing; every peasant  
can give us that.\*

*Ant. E.*—But if the food is common, welcome is still more common,  
if costs one nothing—it is just air.

*Bal.*—A very little of food will be sufficient to make a merry feast if it is  
accompanied by great heartiness and good will.

*Ant. E.*—Yes, it will make a merry feast, if the host be niggardly and  
the guest be abstemious—i.e., where the guest eats nothing and the host  
does not want him to eat. But, however poor my dinner may be, you must  
take it in good part as an expression of my good will. Better dinner you  
may get elsewhere, but I am sure that you cannot get anything which comes  
from a more loving spirit. But, hush, the door of my house seems to be  
locked. Go, Dromio, call the servants and ask them to let us in.

*Dro. E.*—(Calls the servants by name).

*Dro. S.*—(Mimicking from inside) Fool, dullard, idiot! lazy, braggartly

\* The idea is—'But welcome is more rare'.



Either get thee from the door or sit down at the hatch.  
 Dost thou conjure for wenches, that thou call'st for such  
 store

35

When one is one too many ? Go get thee from the door.

*Dro. E.* What patch is made our porter ?—My master  
 stays in the street.

*Dro. S. E.* [*Within*] Let him walk from whence he came,  
 lest he catch cold on's feet.

*Ant. E.* Who talks within there ? ho, open the door !

beast ! Either get away from here or sit down at the hatch door, if you  
 will. Do you want to call up girls by magic that you mention such a lot of  
 them, seeing specially that even one woman is one too many ? \*

*Dro. E.*—What fool is it that acts as porter ! Hark thee, listen, the  
 master is waiting outside. †

*Dro. S.*—(Still speaking from within) Well, let your master return  
 whence he came, otherwise his feet will catch cold. ‡

*Ant. E.*—Who is it that talks from inside ? Come, open the door.  
 fellow !

\* From the lot of girls' names you mention, it would seem as if you  
 wanted to conjure them up by magic ! But don't you know that even one  
 woman is one too many, is too much of a burden ?

† Through the whole of this scene we must remember that there were  
 evidently two gateways to the house—an outer gateway leading to the  
 yard and an inner gateway leading to the house. In the first part of the  
 scene, Antipholus and his guests are standing at the outer door, while  
 Dromio goes to the inner door in order to call the servants. After a time  
 his master joins him there : and then, as Antipholus calls for a crow-bar  
 in order to break down the door—his guests come up and dissuade him  
 from doing so

‡ I shall not let him in ; therefore he will catch cold if he remains  
 longer here.

*Dro. S.* [*Within*] Right, sir ; I'll tell, you when, an you'll tell me wherefore. 40

*Ant. E.* Wherefore ? for my dinner ; I have not dined, to-day.

*Dro. S.* [*Within*]. Nor to-day here you must not , come again when you may.

*Ant. E.* What art thou that keepest me out form the house I owe ;

*Dro. S.* [*Within*] The porter for this time, sir, and my name is Dromio

*Dro. E.* O villain, thou hast stolen both mine office and my name ! 45

'The one ne'er got me credit, the other mickle blame  
If thou hadst been Dromio to-day in my place,

*Dro. S.*—(Still scoffing from within) Right you are, my master ! I'll tell you *when* I shall open the door if you will only tell me *why* I should do so \*

*Ant. E.*—Wherefore—do you ask ? Why, it is to dine, fellow, I have not dined yet to-day !

*Dro. S.*—Ah, then you are not going to dine to-day at all—at least not here. Meanwhile, please call some other time if you like

*Ant. E.*—Who are you that you venture to keep me out of my house ?

*Dro. S.*—Well, sir, I am porter for the time being and my name is Dromio.

*Dro. E.*—O villain, you have stolen both my name and office ! But (I fear that you won't have much joy of either, for) my name never did me any credit and my work has often procured me a good deal of blame. Besides, if you had been Dromio and in my place to-day, then you would have liked

\*Dromio is playing upon a well-known proverb 'Tell me *why* and I shall tell you *when*.'\* 'You ask me to open the door, and I shall do it in a trice ; only, first let me know *why* I should do so.'

Thou wouldst have changed thy face for a name, or thy name for a face.

*Luce.* [*Within*] What a coil is there, Dromio? who are those at the gate?

*Dro. E.* Let my master in, Luce. 50

*Luce.* [*Within*], Faith, no; he comes too late,  
And so tell your master.

*Dro. E.* O Lord! I must laugh!  
Have at you with a proverb—Shall I set in my staff?

*Luce.* [*Within*] Have at you with another; that's—When?  
can you tell? 55

either to change the face keeping the name\* or to change the name keeping the face.

*Luce.*—Dromio, what is all this disturbance about? Who are these people at the gate?

*Dro. E.*—Luce, it is our master; please let us come in.

*Luce.*—O, not so, upon my word! Please tell your master that he comes too late.

*Dro. E.*—O Lord, surely this is a most ludicrous situation! Ordinary speech seems to be insufficient for the purpose, and so I must try my hand at a proverb. I will say—'Shall I set in my staff here?' (In other words, shall I have to make myself comfortable here at the gate?)

*Luce.*—Well, then, I must give you proverb for proverb; and my proverb is—'when? can you tell.' †

\* Of course, Dromio is referring to the beating which he got earlier in the day from Antipholus. His meaning is this: 'If you had been in my place to-day, you would have liked to avoid the beating I got; and you could have done this only in two ways, i. e., either by changing your face (if you kept the name) or by changing the name (if you kept the face), i. e. in either case, by changing your identity.'

† The point is this: *Dro. E.* has asked—'Shall I make myself comfortable here?' and *Luce* answers 'But that will never be; you will never be allowed to make yourself comfortable'; and she expresses her meaning by the common proverb 'when? can you tell?'

*Dro. S.* [*Within*] If thy name be called Luce,—  
Luce, thou hast answer'd him well.)

*Ant. E.* Do you hear, you minion? you'll let us in,  
trow?

*Luce.* [*Within*] I thought to have ask'd you.

*Dro. S.* [*Within*] And you said no. 60

*Dro. E.* So; come, help: well struck! there was blow  
for blow.)

*Ant. E.* Thou baggage, let me in. *Knock*

*Luce.* [*Within*] Can you tell for whose sake?

*Dro. E.* master, knock the door hard.

*Dro. S.*—If your name is Luce, I must say this—'Luce, you have  
answered very well.'

*Ant. E.*—Do you hear, you wretched woman? Surely you must allow  
me to enter!

*Luce.*—(Again chaffing from within) Ah! I was only waiting for your  
permission to let you in!

*Dro. S.*—(In the same jesting mood) And you yourself refused the  
permission! \*

*Dro. E.*—(By this time *Ant. E.* has begun to hammer at the door)  
'That is it, master! That was a good blow of yours! That was just the kind  
of blow they deserve.'

*Ant. E.*—Wretched, worthless girl, let me come in.

*Luce.*—Will you tell me why?

*Dro. E.*—

\* Both of them are making merry at the outsider's strange pretence of  
being the 'master of the house. Luce says—'I must surely let you in;  
I am only waiting to have your permission!' And Dromio caps her answer  
by saying—'she wanted your permission and you refused to give it. There-  
fore, how can she let you in when you yourself object?' Of course, all  
this serves only to exasperate the angry Antipholus still further, and he now  
begins hammering at the door.

*Luce.* [*Within*] Let him knock till it ache. 65

*Ant. E.* You'll cry for this, minion, if I beat the door down.

*Luce.* [*Within*] What needs all that, and a pair of stocks in the town?

*Adr.* [*Within*] Who is that at the door that keeps all this noise?

*Dro. S.* [*Within*] By my troth, your town is troubled with unruly boys.

*Ant. E.* Are you there, wife? you might have come before 70

*Adr.* [*Within*] Your wife, sir knave! go get you from the door.

*Dro. E.* If you want in pain, I'faith master, this 'knave' would go sore.

*Luce.*—Well, let him strike till he is tired of striking.

*A. E.*—You will have to weep for this insult, you girl, even if I have to break down my door.

*Luce.*—What is the need of this violence? Is n't there a pair of stocks in the town? (In other words, are n't you afraid of being put in the stocks for this violence of yours?)

*Adriana.*

*Dro. S.*—Upon my word, there must be a lot of troublesome talk in this place

*A. E.*—Is that you, wife? You ought to have come to the door earlier

*Adriana.*—Your wife, you rogue! do you venture to call me your wife? Go, get you gone from this place.

*Dro. E.*—Master, from the tone of the mistress's answer, it seems that this rogue (meaning himself) will have to pay dearly even if *you* were to get in.

*Ang.* Here is neither cheer, sir, nor welcome : we would fain have either.

*Bal.* In debating which was best, we shall part with neither.

*Dro. E.* They stand at the door, master ; bid them welcome hither. 75

*Ant. E.* There is something in the wind, that we cannot get in.

*Dro. E.* You would say so, master, if your garments were thin.

Your cake there is warm within : you stand here in the cold .

*Angelo*—Well, sir, here is no prospect of getting either meat or welcome,\* though we should be content with either.

*Balthazar*—In discussing as to which is better—meat or welcome—it seems that we are likely to miss both.

*Dro. E.*—(Pointing to Balthazar and Angelo) Your guests are standing outside, master ; please bid them welcome.

*Ant. E.*—There must be some mischief somewhere , otherwise, how is it that we can't get in ?

*Dro. E.*—You would have more cause to say so (viz. that there is something in the wind), if your dress had been thin. † There is a hot dinner waiting for you inside and meanwhile you are left kicking

\* The reference is to their former debate about the respective superiority of good dinner and hearty welcome.

† Mark the pun in the expression "something in the wind." *Ant. E.* says—"There is something in the wind"—meaning that there was some trouble brewing somewhere. To this *Dro. E.* answers—"you would have more cause to say that there was something in the wind (meaning that the wind was sharp ) if your dress had been thin which it is not."

It would make a man mad as a buck, to be so bought and sold.

*Ant. E.* Go fetch me something : I'll break ope the gate. 80

*Dro. S.* [*Within*] Break any breaking here, and I'll break your knave's pate.

*Dro. E.* A man may break a word with you, sir, and words are but wind ;

Ay, and break it in your face, so he break it not behind.

*Dro. S.* [*Within*] It seems thou want'st breaking out upon thee, hind !

your heels in the cold outside. To be so deceived, to be left in such an awkward position, would make a man as mad as a buck.

*Ant. E.*—Go, bring me something with which I can break open this gate

*Dro. S.*—If you talk of breaking, then I shall break your head

*Dro. E.*—Ah, ah ! Why are you so impatient of breaking ? People may at least break words with you ( i. e. talk with you ), seeing that words are nothing but wind. Yea, and they can not only break words with you but break them in your very face, provided only that they don't break them behind your back.

*Dro. S.*—You talk such a lot that you want same breaking (deserve some punishment) yourself ! Shame upon you, you wretch !

\* *Dro. E.*'s meaning can be thus extracted from the orgy of punning in which he indulges. 'From your speech, you would seem to dislike all breaking ; but I shall prove that you don't so dislike it as you pretend. For you allow people to break words with you ( i. e. talk with you ), not only that—but you allow them also to break words in your very face !

*Dro. E.* Here's too much 'out upon thee' ! I pray thee,  
let me in. 85

*Dro. S.* [*Within*] Ay, when fowls have no feathers and  
fish have no fin.

*Ant. E.* Well, I'll break in : go borrow me a crow.

*Dro. E.* A crow without feather ? Master, mean you so :  
For a fish without a fin, there's a fowl without a feather :  
If a crow help us in, sirrah, we'll pluck a crow together 90

*Ant. E.* Go get thee gone ; fetch me an iron crow.

*Bal.* Have patience, sir . O, let it not be so !  
Herein you war against your reputation,  
And draw within the compass of suspect  
The unviolated honour of your wife 95

*Dro. S.*—Hence is too much 'casting shame' on your part ! (In other words, you are going too far in your violence ! ) Once again I beg that you will allow me to enter.

*Dro. S.*—Yes, I shall allow you to enter when birds cease to have feathers and fishes cease to have fins

*Ant. E.*—Well, I will break my way into the house. Go, bring a crow-bar for the purpose.

*Dro. E.*—Master, in asking me to bring a crow, I presume that you mean a crow without feathers ! (And so, here is one part of my fine gentleman's condition fulfilled ! ) He (meaning Dromio within) wanted fishes without fins and fowls without feathers ; and here we are actually going to have a fowl without feathers ! By the way, if a crow helps us in (*i.e.* if we can break into the house with the help of a crow-bar), I shall by and by have a crow to pluck with you. (In other words, I shall have a nice big row with you.)

*Ant. E.*—Go, get away, bring me an iron crow-bar.

*Bal.*—Be patient, Sir. Do not proceed to such an extremity. By acting thus violently, you will damage your own reputation and expose to suspicion the unblemished honour of your wife. Besides, consider this



Once this,—your long experience of her wisdom,  
 Her sober virtue, years, and modesty,  
 Plead on her part some cause to you unknown ;  
 And doubt not, sir, but she will well excuse  
 Why at this time the doors are made against you 100  
 Be ruled by me : depart in patience,  
 And let us to the Tiger all to dinner ,  
 And about evening, come yourself, alone,  
 To know the reason, of this strange restraint.  
 If by strong hand you offer to break in, 105  
 Now in the stirring passage of the day,  
 A vulgar comment will be made of it,  
 And that supposed by the common rout  
 Against your yet ungalled estimation  
 That may with foul intrusion enter in 110  
 And dwell upon your grave when you are dead :

— — — — —  
 once for all Your wife's modesty, virtue, age, your own long experience  
 of her prudence and discretion—all this will convince you that there must  
 be some cause for her present conduct ; and you may be quite certain  
 that she has some excellent reason as to why the door should be shut  
 against you. Take counsel from me ; depart peacefully from this place,  
 and let us proceed to the Tiger inn for dinner. And when it is evening,  
 come alone to your house and learn from your wife the reason for this  
 strange conduct of hers. On the other hand, if you break violently into  
 the house at this busy hour of the day, people will put an ugly construction  
 upon it ; and the common, vulgar throng will entertain against your  
 unblemished reputation all sorts of base and ugly rumours—things which  
 will take root in the popular mind and will follow you even to your grave.\*  
 For it is the nature of slander to bring a crowd (succession) of other

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\* In other words, a strong suspicion will be engendered against you  
 which you will not be able to shake off even till the time of your death.

For slander lives upon succession,  
For e'er housed where it gets possession.

*Ant. E.* You have prevail'd : I will depart in quiet.  
And, in despite of wrath, mean to be merry. 115  
I know a wench of excellent discourse,  
Pretty and witty : wild, and yet, too, gentle ?  
'There will we dine. 'This woman that I mean,  
My wife—but, I protest, without desert—  
Hath oftentimes upbraided me withal 120  
'To her will we to dinner. [*To Ang.*] Get you home.  
And fetch the chain, by this, I know, 'tis made :  
Bring it, I pray you, to the Porpentine ;  
For there's the house : that chain will I bestow—  
Be it for nothing but to spite my wife— 125

slanders in its train, and when slander has once taken root in the public mind, it seems to settle there permanently and unshakably \*

*Ant. E.*—Well, you have succeeded in persuading me. I shall depart in peace ; and as if to show my contempt for wrath, I am resolved to be merry. I know a girl full of the most excellent conversation who is both pretty and witty, a wild wanton creature and yet shy and gentle in disposition ; and now we shall all go to dine at her house. My wife has often upbraided me about this girl, but hitherto without any cause ; and now (because this girl is obnoxious to her) it is to her that we shall go. (Addressing the goldsmith)\* Go home and bring the chain, for I am sure it must have been finished by this time. Take it to the sign of the Porpentine ; that is the house where the girl lives ; and to her I shall give this chain to spite my wife it for nothing else. Go, my friend,

\* Just as one fool makes many, so one slander makes many. In other words, one slander brings a crop of successive slanders in its train ; and once it has taken root in the popular mind, you can never shake it off.

Upon mine hostess there : good sir, make haste.

Since mine own doors refuse to entertain me,

I'll knock elsewhere, to see if they'll disdain me.

*Ang.* I'll meet you at that place some hour hence.

*Ant. E.* Do so. This jest shall cost me some  
expense. [*Exeunt.* 130

SCENE II. *The same.*

*Enter* LUCIANA and ANTIPHOLUS of Syracuse,

*Luc.* And may it be that you have quite forgot

A husband's office ? Shall, Antipholus,

Even in the spring of love, thy love-springs rot ?

Shall love, in building, grow so ruinous ?

If you did wed my sister for her wealth, 5

Then for her wealth's sake use her with more kindness :

Or if you like elsewhere, do it by stealth .

go soon . since I am refused admission into my own house I shall see  
whether I can't find welcome elsewhere.

*Angelo*—I will meet you at this place about an hour from now.

*Ant. E.*—Do so, though I find that this practical joke of my wife is  
going to prove a bit expensive.

SCENE 2.

[*Luciana and Antipholus S. enter.*]

*Luc.*—Is it possible that you have quite forgotten the duties of a husband ? Will your love wither at the very source, now when it ought to flourish most vigorously in your heart ! Will it crumble to pieces even in the process of building ?\* Supposing that you married my sister only for the sake of her wealth, even then, for the sake of that very wealth, you ought to treat her more kindly. If you must love somebody else, at least

\* The idea is this—'You have been married for some time; and it is now that Love ought to flourish vigorously in your heart. And yet now, in the very spring time and hey-day of love, passion for your wife seem to have quite withered in your heart.'

Muffle your false love with some show of blindness ;  
 Let not my sister read it in your eye ;  
 Be not thy tongue thy own shame's orator 10  
 Look sweet, speak fair, become disloyalty ,  
 Apparel vice like virtue's harbinger ;  
 Bear a fair presence, though your heart be tainted :  
 Teach sin the carriage of a holy saint ; ✓ 11  
 Be secret-false : what need she be acquainted ? 15  
 What simple thief brags of his own attain ?  
 'Tis double wrong, to truant with your bed  
 And let her read it in thy looks at board :  
 Shame hath a bastard fame, well managed .  
 Ill deeds are doubled with an evil word. 20  
 Alas, poor women ! make us but believe,  
 Being compact of credit, that you love us :

do it secretly (do not flaunt it in my sister's face.) It may be that you have false, treacherous love for somebody else ; but dissemble it, do not let her read it in your very face, do not brag of it with your own voice. Whatever the feelings of your heart may be, at least talk and speak kindly to my sister ; you may be disloyal in your feelings, but at least put on an outer appearance of decency. Trick out your vice so that it may look like virtue. Your heart may be corrupt, but at least bear a fair outside and disguise your sins so that you may look like a saint. If you are false, be false in secret ; but what is the good of acquainting her with your vice ? Is there any thief so foolish as to brag of his robbery ? (And why should you brag of your unchastity ?) It is wrong enough to be false to your marriage bed ; but it is double wrong to be false and to flaunt the treachery in her very face. Even your shame may have a bastard reputation if you can manage it discreetly ; but it doubles the wrong if you accompany your shameful deeds by cruel and spiteful words.—Alas, we poor women are a set of credulous creatures ! only make us believe that you love us and we are easily satisfied. Other women may enjoy

Though others have the arm, show us the sleeve ;

We in your motion turn and you may move us.

Then, gentle brother, get you in again : 25

Comfort my sister, cheer her, call her wife ;

'Tis holy sport to be a little vain,

When the sweet breath of flattery conquers strife

*Ant. S.* Sweet mistress,—what your name is else, I know not,

Nor by what wonder you do hit of mine,— 30

Less in your knowledge and your grace you show not

Than our earth's wonder : more than earth divine.

Teach me, dear creature, how to think and speak :

Lay open to my earthy-gross conceit,

Smother'd in errors, feeble, shallow, weak, 35

The folded meaning of your words' deceit.

Against my soul's pure truth why labour you

To make it wander in an unknown field ?

Are you a god ? would you create me new ?

your arm (*i.e.* may enjoy the real substance of your favour), but we are satisfied if you give us a mere sleeve (*i.e.* if you give us the mere outside show of affection.) In fact, we are like your satellites ; we depend wholly upon you and move with your motion. Then, gentle brother, enter the house again, cheer and comfort my sister, and address her as your wife. A man may be vain when with a little, simple flattery he can conquer his wife's heart. But this vanity is quite innocent and harmless.

*Ant. S.*—Sweet mistress, I do not know what is your name, though by some wonderful means you have discovered mine. Both in knowledge as well as in charm you appear like a very miracle of the earth—something more divine than any earthly creature can be. Teach me, dear and most precious being, how I must think and speak. My understanding is dull, coarse, steeped in error, feeble and foolish ; but disclose before it the hidden meaning of your words. Why do you want me to believe things which I know to be false ? Are you a god ? Do you want to create me

'Transform me then, and to your power I 'll yield. 40  
 But if that I am I, then well I know  
 Your weeping sister is no wife of mine,  
 Nor to her bed no homage do I owe :  
 Far more, far more, to you do I decline.  
 O, train me not, sweet mermaid, with thy note, 45  
 To drown me in thy sister's flood of tears.  
 Sing, siren, for thyself, and I will dote .  
 Spread o'er the silver waves thy golden hairs  
 And as a bed I 'll take them and there lie .  
 And, in that glorious supposition, think 50  
 He gains by death that hath such means to die :  
 Let Love, being light, be drowned if she sink !

anew \* Well, if you can, do so, change me wholly ; and beautiful as you  
 are, I shall not resist your art, but shall yield myself wholly to your in-  
 fluence. But if I am what I believe that I am, then I know that I am not  
 the husband of your weeping sister and that I owe no homage or allegiance  
 to her. Nay, it is to you that my inclination turns. Therefore, sweet  
 siren, do not persuade me to fall in love with your sister (and drown my-  
 self in the flood of her tears), rather speak for yourself so that I may  
 fall in love with you. Yea, if you spread your golden hair upon the sil-  
 ver waves of the sea, I shall be content to make my bed even there—know-  
 ing that to die so will be to die happily. † Love, they say, is light  
 (inconstant), and if love sinks (if I am to be hopeless in my quest of love)  
 then let life also be drowned. ‡

\* The idea is this . You know that I do not belong to this place, that I  
 am not your sister's husband, nor your brother-in-law ; and yet, against  
 my soul's conviction, you seek to make me believe in all these things. Are  
 you then a god that you would create me anew and invest me with a life  
 and family which are not my own ?

† The idea is this : No doubt it would be sure death to lie upon the  
 waves of the sea ; but I should be content so to die, if only *you* would  
 spread your golden hair upon those waves.

‡ For a full explanation of this obscure passage, see *notes*.

*Luc.* What, are you mad, that you do reason so ?

*Ant. S.* Not mad, but mated ; how, I do not know.

*Luc.* It is a fault that springeth from your eye. 55

*Ant. S.* For gazing on your beams, fair sun, being by.

*Luc.* Gaze where you should, and that will clear your sight.

*Ant. S.* As good to wink, sweet love, as look on night.

*Luc.* Why call you me love ? call my sister so.

*Ant. S.* Thy sister's sister. 60

*Luc.* That's my sister.

*Ant. S.* No ,

It is thyself, mine own self's better part,

Mine eye's clear eye, my dear heart's dearer heart,

My food, my fortune, and my sweet hope's aim, 65

My sole earth's heaven, and my heaven's claim.

*Luc.* —Are you mad that you talk like this ?

*Ant. S.*—Not mad but confounded in spirit ; and I do not know why

*Luc.*—It is a fault that springs from the infatuation of your senses.

*Ant. S.*—Then I have been infatuat<sup>d</sup> (blinded) by gazing upon the bright beams of your beauty.

*Luc.*—Gaze where you ought to, viz. upon the beauty of my sister, and then your senses will be clear again.

*Ant. S.*—One may as well shut his eyes as gaze upon what is dark like night.\*

*Luc.*—Why do you address me as your love ? Address my sister so

*Ant. S.*—I shall so address not your sister but your sister's sister.

*Luc.*—And my sister's sister is after all my sister !

*Ant. S.*—Nay, it is not your sister but yourself—you who are the better part of my being, who are the eye of my eye and the heart of my heart, the food upon which I feed, the fortune which sustains my life, the hope of my endeavour, my heaven in earth and my only hope of attaining heaven.

\*You ask me to gaze upon your sister ; but compared with you, your sister is dark and ugly like the night ; and therefore to gaze upon her would be as good as shutting one's eyes

*Luc.* All this my sister is, or else should be.

*Ant. S.* Call thyself sister, sweet, for I am thee.  
Thee will I love, and with thee lead my life :  
'Thou hast no husband yet, nor I no wife. 70  
Give me thy hand.

*Luc.* O, soft, sir ! hold you still :  
I'll fetch my sister, to get her good will. *[Exit.]*

*Enter DROMIO of Syracuse.*

*Ant. S.* Why, how now, Dromio ? where runn'st thou  
so fast ?

*Dro. S.* Do you know me, sir ? am I Dromio ? am I your  
man ? am I myself? 75

*Ant. S.* 'Thou art Dromio, thou art my man, thou art  
thyself.

*Dro. S.* I am an ass, I am a woman's man, and besides  
myself.

*Ant. S.* What woman's man ? and how besides thyself ?

*Luc.*—All this is what my sister is or ought to be to you.

*Ant. S.*—Then call yourself your sister, for I mean these things for  
you. It is you whom I will love, and it is you to whom I shall show my  
love. You are not married yet, neither am I ; so give your hand in  
marriage to me.

*Luc.*—O silence sir, be still. I must fetch my sister and it is she who  
will decide these things.

*Dromio of Syracuse enters from within.]*

*Ant. S.*

*Dro. S.*—Do you know me, sir ? Am I really Dromio ? Am I your  
servant ? Am I what I am ?

*Ant. S.*—Yes, thou art Dromio, thou art my servant.

*Dro. S.*—No, I can't be Dromio. Surley I am an ass, I have become a  
woman's man and I am not myself.

*Ant. S.*—What woman's slave have you become ? And how is it that  
you have ceased to be yourself ?



*Dro. S.* Marry, sir, besides myself, I am due to a woman  
one that claims me, one that haunts me, one that will  
have me. 80

*(Ant. S.* What claim lays she to thee?

*Dro. S.* Marry, sir, such claim as you would lay to your  
horse ; and she would have me as beast : not that, I being  
a beast, she would have me ; but that she, being a very beastly  
creature, lays claim to me. 85

*Ant. S.* What is she ?

*Dro. S.* A very reverent body, ay, such a one as a man  
may not speak of without he say 'sir-reverence.' I have but  
lean luck in the match, and yet is she a wondrous fat  
marriage. 90

*Ant. S.* How dost thou mean a fat marriage?

*Dro. S.* Marry, sir, she's the kitchen wench, and all grease.

*Dro. S.*—well, sir, I am *beside* myself, because, *besides* myself, a woman  
also seems to be entitled to me ;\* a woman claims me, dogs my steps and  
insists upon having me.

*Ant. S.*—What is the claim that she makes upon you ?

*Dro. S.*—Well, sir, it is such claim as you can make to your horse. In  
other words, she wants to ride upon me and have me as her beast. Of  
course, if I had been really a beast, she would not care to have me ; but  
she being beastly herself wants to have me for her own purposes.

*Ant. S.* . . . .

*Dro. S.*—She is a very reverend and aged person ; yea, if she had been  
a man, she could have been addressed as 'your reverence.' If there is  
really a match between her and myself, then I am surely lean (unlucky)  
in marriage, though in other respects the marriage will be fat enough.

*Ant. S.*—What do you mean by a fat marriage ?

*Dro. S.*—Why, sir, she is a kitchen-girl, all compact of fat—so' much so

\* Note the pun upon *besides* and *beside*. The idea can be thus fully  
brought out. 'No doubt a man is entitled to be master of himself. But  
now I find that *besides* myself a woman also lays claim to me ; and  
therefore I am *beside* myself.'

and I know not what use to put her to but to make a lamp of her and run from her by her own light. I warrant, her rags and the tallow in them will burn a Poland 95 winter : if she lives till doomsday, she'll burn a week longer than the whole world.

*Ant. S.* What complexion is she of ?

*Dro. S.* Swart, like my shoe, but her face nothing like so clean kept : for why ? she sweats ; a man may go 100 over shoes in the grime of it.

*Ant. S.* That's a fault that water will mend.

*Dro. S.* No, sir, 'tis in grain : Noah's flood could not do it.

*Ant. S.* What's her name ?

that the only use I can think of making of her is to set her on fire and then run away by the light that she gives.\* She is so ragged and her dress is so coated with grease that she will burn during the whole of a Poland winter.† Yea, if she lives till the day of last judgment, she will turn for a week later than the rest of the world.

*Ant. S.*—What is her complexion ?

*Dro. S.*—It is black like my shoe but not clean like my shoe ; and why ? because she perspires so heavily. In fact, she is so clothed with dirt that a man may sink down to his shoes in the filth of her body.

*Ant. S.*—Well, if she is dirty, that is a fault which can be cured by water.

*Dro. S.*—No, sir, water will not wash out her dirt ; it is ingrained in her very being. Even Noah's flood which washed out the world could not wash out her dirt.

*Ant. S.*...

\* The idea is this : Being full of fat she will soon take fire, and then I will run by the light that she gives.

† Being compact of fat and rags, she will burn for a long time—yea, during the whole of a Poland winter.

*Dro. S.* Nell, sir; but her name and three quarters 105  
that's an ell and three quarters, will not measure her from  
hip to hip.

*Ant. S.* Then she bears some breadth ?

*Dro. S.* No longer from head to foot than from hip  
to hip . she is spherical, like a globe ; I could find out 110  
countries in her.

*Ant. S.* In what part of her body stands Ireland ?

*Dro. S.* Marry, sir, in her buttocks, I found it out  
by the bogs.

*Ant. S.* Where Scotland ?

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*Dro. S.* I found it by the barrenness , hard in the  
palm of the hand.

*Ant. S.* Where France ?

*Dro. S.*—Her name is Nell ; but her name (i.e. *an ell*) with three  
quarters added to it could not measure her breadth from side to side.\*

*Ant. S.*—Then she is very broad ?

*Dro. S.*—Yes, sir, her length from head to foot is not greater than her  
breadth from hip to hip. She is round also, quite like a globe ; and one  
can trace continents and countries in her as in a globe.

*Ant. S.*—Well, if she is a globe and you can trace countries in her body,  
then which part of her body would correspond to Ireland ?

*Dro. S.*—Sir, Ireland would be in her buttocks, for they are soft  
and podgy like the bogs of Ireland.

*Ant. S.* . . . . .

*Dro. S.*—In her hands which are hard and barren like Scotland.

*Ant. S.*—And where would France be ?—

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\* Notice the pun upon the pronunciation Nell—an ell, which is a unit  
of measurement.

*Dro. S.* in her forehead, armed and reverted, making war against her heir. 120

*Ant. S.* Where England?

*Dro. S.* I looked for the chalky cliffs, but I could find no whiteness in them, but I guess it stood in her chin, by the salt rheum that ran between France and it.

*Ant. S.* Where Spain? 125

*Dro. S.* Faith, I saw it not, but I felt it hot in her breath.

*Dro. S.*—In her forehead, for it is armed with horns (pimples and carbuncles) like that of a man suffering from the French disease; and it makes war against the hair, i.e., (encroaches upon the hair of the head) just as France is now making war against her heir.†

*Ant. S.*—And where England?

*Dro. S.*—Well, I looked for the chalk-cliffs of England but unfortunately found no whiteness in any part of her body. However, judging from the salt rheum that runs between her forehead and her chin I should guess that England would be in her chin.\*

\* *Ant. S.*—Where did you find Spain?

*Dro. S.*—Well, I could not see Spain in her body, but I felt it, viz. in the hot, stinking breath of her mouth.

† Notice the pun upon *hair* and *heir*—a pun which we have already had once before. This kitchen maid's forehead warred against her *hair* just as France at this time was engaged in warring against the legitimate *heir*. Henry IV.—There is an allusion to the French disease as venereal disease was popularly known. A man suffering from the French disease loses his hair, and his face is covered with pimples and pustules; and similarly this kitchen maid's forehead was full of warts and welks while the hair had fallen off from her head.

† The point of the jest can be thus given. 'The salt fluid of the sea separates England from France. Now, here was salt water running between her forehead and her chin; and therefore, France being the forehead, England would be the chin'. Of course the salt water or the salt rheum would refer to the catarrhal droppings from the woman's eyes and nose.

*Ant. S.* Where America, the Indies ?

*Dro. S.* Oh, sir, upon her nose, all o'er embellished with rubies, carbuncles, sapphires, declining their rich aspect to the hot breath of Spain, who sent whole armies 130  
does of caracks to be ballast at her nose.

*Ant. S.* Where stood Belgia, the Netherlands ?

*Dro. S.* Oh, sir, I did not look so low. To conclude, this drudge, or diviner, laid claim to me ; called me Dromio ; swore I was assured to her ; told me what privy 135  
marks I had about me, as, the mark of my shoulder, the mole in my neck, the great wart on my left arm, that I amazed, ran from her as a witch :

*Ant. S.*—And where would you find the West Indies in her body ?

*Dro. S.*—Well, sir, I would find the Indies in her nose, which is embellished with pimples and warts (even as the West Indies are decked with rubies and carbuncles) and which looks down towards her mouth, even as the West Indies wait\* upon the favour of Spain. And just as Spain despatches whole fleets of ships in order† to be loaded with precious ore at America so her mouth is loaded with freight from her nose.

*Ant. S.*—And where stood Belgium and the Netherlands ?

*Dro. S.*—O sir, modesty forbade me to look so low†. To sum up the whole matter, this kitchen-maid or magician (whichever you may be pleased to call her) laid claim upon me. She addressed me by my name, swore that I was pledged to marry her ; and, to confirm the truth of her story, told me even of the secret birth-marks which I bear upon my body—for instance the mark on my shoulder, the mole on my neck, and so on. I was so confounded with all this that I ran away from her as if she had

\* America (the Indies) is politically the vassal of Spain, and therefore may be pictured as waiting patiently, with looks turned in the direction of Spain and similarly, the nose of this kitchen-maid dropped in this direction of her mouth.

† The point is this. The Netherlands being low would naturally be in the lower parts of her body ; but modesty forbade him to look so low.

And I think, if my breast had not been made of flint-  
and my heart of steel,

She had transform'd me to a curtal dog, and made  
me turn i' the wheel. 140

*Ant. S.* Go hic thee presently, post to the road ;

An if the wind blow any way from shore,

I will not harbour in this town to-night :

If any bark put forth, come to the mart,

Where I will walk till thou return to me. 145

If every one knows us, and we know none,

'Tis time, I think, to trudge, pack and be gone.

*Dro. S.* As from a bear a man would run for life,

So fly I from her that would be my wife. [ *Exit.*

*Ant. S.* Ther's none but witches do inhabit here ; 150

And therefore 'tis high time that I were hence.

She that doth call me husband, even my soul

been a witch ; and if my heart had not been as hard as flint and iron, she  
could have changed me into a tailless dog and made me turn the spit for her  
in the kitchen.†

*Ant. S.*—Go, run to the harbour at once ; and if there is any wind  
blowing from the shore—in whichever direction it may blow—I shall  
take ship and escape from this place. If there is any vessel starting from  
the port to-day, bring me news of it at the Exchange where I shall now go  
and walk about till you return. When everybody claims to know us while  
we can't recognise any body—it is time, I think that I should pack our  
luggage and be gone

*Dro. S.*—Well I shall go quickly to do your bidding—as quickly as a  
man may run when he seeks to escape from a bear.

*Ant. S.*—It seems that this place is inhabited only by witches, and so  
it is high time that we should make off from here. The woman that

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† But that my heart is as hard as flint, she could have done with me  
just as she liked—could have changed me into a tailless dog or whatever  
she wanted.

Doth for a wife abhor, but her fair sister,  
 Possess'd with such a gentle sovereign grace,  
 Of such enchanting presence and discourse, 155  
 Hath almost made me traitor to myself :  
 But, lest myself be guilty to self-wrong,  
 I'll stop mine ears against the mermaid's song .

*Enter ANGELO with the chain.*

*Ang.* Master Antipholus,—

*Ant. S.* Ay, that's my name. 160

*Ang.* I know it well, sir. Lo, here is the chain.

I thought to have ta'en you at the Porpentine .  
 The chain unfinish'd made me stay thus long.

claims me as her husband—well, I abhor her from my very soul ; but it is otherwise with her sister. She is possessed of such wit, and her conversation is so attractive that she almost makes me a traitor to myself (almost induces me to forswear my own knowledge and agree with whatever she says.) But for fear lest her charms induce me to do something wrong I must make myself deaf to all her blandishments.\*

[The Goldsmith enters with a chain†].

*Angelo*—master Antipholus !

*Ant. S.*—Yes, that is my name.

*Angelo*—But I know it very well, sir !‡ Behold, here is the chain which you ordered from me. I wanted to take it to the sign of the Porpentine, but was detained by the triñket not being finished in time.

\* He means—"and this can only be done by running away from her presence."

† Another series of errors here begins with the goldsmith mistaking *Ant. S.* for his brother *Ant. E.* and thus pressing upon the former the chain that had been ordered by the latter.

‡ 'And you need not remind me of it.'

*Ant. S.* What is your will that I shall do with this ?

*Ang.* What please yourself, sir : I have made it for you 165

*Ant. S.* Made it for me, sir ! \* I bespoke it not.

*Ang.* Not once, nor twice, but twenty times you have  
Go home with it and please your wife withal ;

And soon at supper-time I'll visit you,

And then receive my money for the chain. 170

*Ant. S.* I pray you, sir, receive the money now,  
For fear you ne'er see chain nor money more.

*Ang.* You are a merry man, sir : fare you well.

[*Exit.*

*Ant. S.* What I should think of this, I cannot tell ;  
But this I think, there's no man is so vain 175  
That would refuse so fair an offer'd chain.

I see a man here needs not live by sifts,

*Int. S.*—But what do you want me to do with this chain ?

*Angelo*—Whatever you please, sir ; you ordered me to make the chain,  
and here it is !

*Ant. S.*—Do you mean to say that you made it for me ? But I never  
ordered it !

*Angelo*—Yea, but you ordered it not once, nor twice, but twenty times—  
[over Well, sir, take it home with you and please your wife by presenting  
to her. Meanwhile, I shall see you again at supper-time and then you  
will give me the price of it.

*Ant. S.*—Well, sir, I pray that you will take the price now, as other-  
wise I may be gone and then you will see neither your chain nor money  
again.

*Angelo*—(Refusing to take the money) Nay, sir, you are pleased to  
be jesting. Fare you well.

[The goldsmith goes away.]

*Ant. S.*—Well, I don't know what to make of this ! But when a chain of  
such value is pressed upon a man, he need not be so foolish as to refuse it.  
I find that in this strange city a man need not live by the exercise of his



When in the streets he meets such golden gifts.

I'll to the mart, and there for Dromio stay :

If any ship put out, then straight away.

180 [*Exit.*

## ACT IV.

### SCENE I. *A public place.*

*Enter* Second Merchant, ANGELO and an Officer.

*Sec. Mer.* You know since Pentecost the sum is due,

And since I have not much importuned you ;

Nor now I had not, but that I am bound

To Persia and want guilders for my voyage :

Therefore make present satisfaction,

5

Or I'll attach you by this officer.

*Ang.* Even just the sum that I do owe to you

Is growing to me by Antipholus,

And in the instant that I met with you,

He had of me a chain : at five o'clock

10

I shall receive the money for the same.

wits, seeing that gifts of such value are pressed upon you at every hand  
Well, I will go to the Change and there wait for Dromio ; and if any ship  
is starting from the harbour to-day, I shall make off in that.

## ACT IV.

4

### SCENE I.

*Sec. Mer.*—You know that the money has been overdue since Pentecost.  
and yet I have not pressed you about it. Yea, and even now I would not  
have demanded it from you but that I am bound upon a voyage for Persia  
and want the money for the enterprise. Theretore, please discharge the  
debt at once or I will have you arrested by this officer.

*Angelo*—The sum that I owe you—that very sum of money is due to  
me from Antipholus ; and he received a chain from me (almost the very  
moment that I met you. Well, I shall receive the price of this chain at

Pleaseth you walk with me down to his house,  
I will discharge my bond, and thank you too.

*Enter ANTIPHOLUS of Ephesus and DROMIO*  
*of Ephesus from the courtesan's.*

*Off.* That labour may you save : see where he comes.

*Ant. E.* While I go to the goldsmith's house, go thou 15  
And buy a rope's end : that will I bestow  
Among my wife and her confederates,  
For locking me out of my doors by day.  
But soft ! I see the goldsmith. Get thee gone ;  
Buy thou a rope and bring it home to me. 20

*Dro. E.* I buy a thousand pound a year : I buy  
a rope. *[Exit-*

*Ant. E.* A man is well help up that trusts to you . . .  
I promised your presence and the chain ;

5 o'clock , and if you would be so good as to walk with me to his house , I  
shall there discharge your debt, and at the same time thank you for your  
kindness

*[Ant. E. and Dro. E. enter on their way from the Courtesan's house.]*

*Off.*—You may spare yourself the trouble of walking to Anti-  
pholus's house ; for look, there he comes.

*Ant. E.*—(Speaking to Dromio) While I proceed to the goldsmith's  
house, you go and buy a rope's end for me ; and with that I shall give a  
good beating to my wife and her fellow-conspirators for having shut me  
out from my house to-day. But, hush, here is the goldsmith himself ! Get  
you gone, sirrah, buy a rope and bring it for me.

*Dro. E.*—Well I shall do your errand joyfully—as joyfully as I would  
receive an annuity of a thousand pounds a year.

*Ant. E.*—(Addressing the goldsmith and blaming him for his delay)  
The man that trusts in you fares very ill, I find ! I promised (*i.e.*, prom-  
ised the courtesan) that you would be present at her house and bring

But neither chain nor goldsmith came to me.

Belike you thought our love would last too long, 25

If it were chain'd together, and therefore came not.

*Ang.* Saving your merry humour, here 's the note

How much your chain weighs to the utmost carat,

The fineness of the gold, and chargeful fashion,

Which doth amount to three odd ducats more 30

Than I stand debted to this gentleman

I pray you, see him presently discharged,

For he is bound to sea and stays but for it.

*Ant. E.* I am not furnish'd with the present money,

Besides, I have some business in the town. 35

Good signior, take the stranger to my house,

And with you take the chain, and bid my wife

Disburse the sum on the receipt thereof.

Perchance, I will be there as soon as you.

*Ang.* Then you will bring the chain to her yourself? 40

*Ant. E.* No; bear it with you, lest I come not time enough

the chain with you; but, lo, neither you nor the chain turned up even? Perhaps you were afraid that if you took the chain to her house, it would prolong our love by fastening us closer together!

*Angelo*—Well, jesting apart, here is a bill of the exact weight of the chain down to the utmost carat; also how much the price will be, considering the fineness of the gold and the heavy expense of making the chain. You will see that the whole sum amounts to 3 ducats more than what I owe this gentleman. Please pay me at once and discharge my debt; for this gentleman is bound for the sea and is waiting only for his money.

*Ant. E.*—Well, I have not money with me at present. Besides I have some business to transact in the town. However, good master Goldsmith, take this gentleman to my house; take also the chain with you; and bid my wife pay you the money after receiving the chain. Perhaps I shall also reach there just as soon as you.

*Angelo*—And you will bring the chain yourself!

*Ang.* Well, sir, I will. Have you the chain about you?

*Ant. E.* An if I have not, sir, I hope you have.

Or else you may return without your money.

• *Ang.* Nay, come, I pray you, sir, give me the chain 45

Both wind and tide stays for this gentleman,

And I, to blame, have held him here too long

*Ant. E.* Good Lord! you use this dalliance to excuse

Your breach of promise to the Porpentine.

I should have chid you for not bringing it. 50

But, like a shrew, you first begin to brawl. ✓

*Sec. Mer.* The hour steals on; I pray you, sir, dispatch.

*Ang.* You hear how he importunes me:—the chain!

*Ant. E.* Why, give it to my wife, and fetch your money

*Ant. E.*—Nay, carry the chain yourself, for it is just possible that I may not arrive in time

*Angelo*—Well, sir, then I shall take the chain myself. But have you got it with you?

*Ant. E.*—Well, and if the chain be not with me, it must surely be with you. And if you have it not, then you will have the misfortune of returning without your money.

*Angelo*—Nay, nay, come, no more of this jesting! Give me the chain, for this gentleman is in a hurry and I am to blame for detaining him thus long.

*Ant. E.*—(Growing angry) O Lord, it is you who are jesting! You use this merry humour as an excuse for your delay in bringing the chain to the Porpentine. It is I who ought to have taken you to task for not bringing the chain in time; but, after the manner of scolds, you anticipated me by yourself beginning to blame me!

*Sec. Mer.*—My hour of departure draws nigh; please finish your business quickly.

*Angelo*—You hear how I am pressed by this gentleman! Please give the money at once.

*Ant. E.*—Why, give it to my wife and take the money from her

*Ang.* Come, come, you know I gave it you even now. 55  
Either send the chain or send me by some token.

*Ant. E.* Fie ! now you run this humour out of breath.  
Come, where's the chain ? I pray you, let me see it.

*Sec. Mer.* My business cannot brook this dalliance.  
Good sir, say whether you 'll answer me or no : 60  
If not, I 'll leave him to the officer.

*Ant. E.* I answer you ! what should I answer you ?

*Ang.* The money that you owe me for the chain.

*Ant. E.* I owe you none till I receive the chain.

*Ang.* You know I gave it you half an hour since. 65

*Ant. E.* You gave me none : you wrong me much to say  
so.

*Angelo*—Come, come, no more of these foolish jests ! I gave you the chain only just now ; either send it through me or give me some token as assurance that you have got the chain."

*Ant. E.*—For shame, you are running this jest to death ! Since you are so urgent about the money, come, let me have the chain itself. Where is it ?

*Sec. Mer.*—My business is pressing, I can't afford all this trifling (Addressing Antipholus E.) Good sir, say whether you will pay me or not. If you won't I shall leave him (the goldsmith) in charge of this officer.

*Ant. E.*—(In high wrath) I pay you ! What shall I pay you for ?

*Angelo*—Well, you may pay him the money that you owe to me.

*Ant. E.*—But I can't owe you any money till I get the chain.

● *Angelo*—You know that I gave you the chain personally only half an hour ago.

*Ant. E.*—Nay, but you gave me no chain whatever, and you insult me by saying that you gave it to me.

*Ang.* You wrong me more, sir, in denying it :  
Consider how it stands upon my credit.

*Sec. Mer.* Well, officer, arrest him at my suit.

*Off.* I do ; and charge you in the duke's name to  
obey me.

70

*Ang.* This touches me in reputation.  
Either consent to pay this sum for me,  
Or I attach you by this officer.

*Ant. E.* Consent to pay thee that I never had !  
Arrest me, foolish fellow, if thou darest.

75

*Ang.* Here is thy fee ; arrest him, officer.  
I would not spare my brother in this case,  
If he should scorn me so apparently.

*Off.* I do arrest you, sir : you hear the suit.

*Angelo*—Well, sir, it is you who insult and injure me by denying the receipt of the chain. Consider how it will injure my credit and reputation.

*Sec. Mer.*—(Pointing to the Goldsmith) Officer, arrest this man upon my suit.

*Officer*.....

*Angelo*—This affects my credit seriously. (Addressing *Ant. E.*) Please pay the sum even now or I shall have you arrested in your turn.

*Ant. E.*—Pay you what I do not owe ! Well, you fool, have me arrested if you dare.

*Angelo*—Officer, here is your fee. Please arrest him at once. Seeing that he scorns me thus openly, I would not spare him even if he were my own brother.

*Officer* .....

*Ant. E.* I do obey thee till I give thee bail. 80  
 But, sirrah, you shall buy this sport as dear  
 As all the metal in your shop will answer.  
*Ang.* Sir, sir, I shall have law in Ephesus,  
 To your notorious shame, I doubt it not.

*Enter DROMIO of Syracuse, from the bay.*

*Dro. S.* Master, there is a bark of Epidamnum 85  
 That stays but till her owner comes aboard,  
 And then, Sir, she bears away. Our fraughtage, sir,  
 I have convey'd aboard and I have bought  
 The oil, the balsamum and aqua-vitæ.  
 The ship is in her trim; the merry wind 90  
 Blows fair from land: they stay for nought at all  
 But for their owner, master, and yourself.

*Ant. E.*—Yes, I shall obey you till I can furnish you with sufficient bail and thus procure my release. (Turning to the Goldsmith and addressing him) But sirrah, you will have to pay heavily for this jest of yours: yea, you will have to pay for it with all the gold and silver in your shop

*Angelo*—Sir, sir, if there is any law in Ephesus, I shall have it against you and thus put you to eternal shame! Of that I am quite sure

[*Dro. S.* who had been ordered by *Ant. S.* to hire a ship, here returns from his errand]

*Dro. S.*—Master, there is a vessel of Epidamnum in the harbour which waits only for the arrival of the Captain and then will start at once. I have carried our goods on board; and I have bought for you the oil, the unguent and the wine that you wanted. The ship is all ready to start, the wind is blowing merrily from the shore, and they are tarrying only for the arrival of yourself and their captain.

*Ant. E.* How now ! a madman ! Why, thou peevish sheep,  
What ship of Epidamnum stays for me ?

*Dro. S.* A ship you sent me to, to hire waftage. 95

*Ant. E.* Thou drunken slave, I sent thee for a rope,  
And told thee to what purpose and what end.

*Dro. S.* You sent me for a rope's end, Sir, as soon.  
You sent me to the bay, sir, for a bark.

*Ant. E.* I will debate this matter at more leisure, 100  
And teach your ears to list me with more heed.  
To Adriana, villa'n, hi'e thee straight :  
Give her this key, and tell her, in the desk  
That's cover'd o'er with Turkish tapestry,

*Ant. E.*—How now ! Have we got a mad man here ? Why, thou fool !  
What ship of Epidamnum is it that waits for me ?

*Dro. S.*—Well, sir, it is the ship where you sent me in order to hire  
a passage for yourself.

*Ant. E.*—Thou drunkard ! I sent you only to buy a rope and I told  
you with what object.

*Dro. S.*—Nay, sir, rather than send me for a rope, you might as well  
have sent me at once for a rope's end to hang myself with ! But as a matter  
of fact you sent me, not for any rope or rope's end but simply to look for  
a ship.\*

*Ant. E.*—Well, I will talk about it when I have more leisure, and will  
teach you how to listen more attentively to me in future. Meanwhile, you  
ought, hasten quickly to my wife. Give her this key and tell her that in  
the desk, covered over with Turkish tapestry, there is a purse of ducats.

\* Note that the first part of the answer is only a jesting quibble upon  
the word 'rope.' Dromio means to deny that he had been sent for a rope,  
and so he takes this round-about way of expressing his meaning. 'Rather  
than send me for a rope you would have sent me as soon to be hanged';  
in other words, 'you sent me on no such fool's purpose.'



There is a purse of ducats : let her send it : 105  
Tell her, I am arrested in the street,  
And that shall bail me : hie thee, slave, be gone !  
On, officer, to prison till it come.

[*Exeunt Sec. Merchant, Angelo, Officer, and Ant. E*

*Dro. S.* To Adriana ! that is where we dined,  
Where Dowsabel did claim me for her husband : 110  
She is too big, I hope, for me to compass.  
Thither I must, although against my will,  
For servants must their master's minds fulfil.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II. *The house of ANTIPHOLUS of Ephesus*

*Enter Adriana and Luciana.*

*Adr.* Ah, Luciana, did he tempt thee so ?  
Might'st thou perceive austerely in his eye  
That he did plead in earnest ? yea or no ?  
Look'd he red, pale or sad or merrily ?

Ask her to send it to me ; tell her that I have been arrested in the street and that the money will be required to bail me out. Quick, thou rogue and be gone. \*Officer, lead on to the prison till that man returns to bail me out.

*Dro. S.*—He asks me to go to Adriana. That is the place where we dined and where Dowsabel claimed me as her husband. Well, she is so big that I cannot embrace her. But all the same, I must go there however unwilling I may be, for servants must always do the bidding of their masters.

SCENE 2.

*Adr.*—Ah, Luciana, did he really tempt you after this fashion ? And could you perceive from the look of his eyes as to whether he was speaking in earnest or not ? Please tell me—yes or no. Did he

What observation mad'st thou, in this case, 5  
Of his heart's meteors tilting in his face ?

*Luc.* First he denied you had in him no right.

*Adr.* He meant, he did me none : the more my spite.

*Luc.* Then swore he, that he was a stranger here.

*Adr.* And true he swore, though yet forsworn he were. 10

*Luc.* Then pleaded I for you.

*Adr.* And what said he ?

*Luc.* That love I begg'd for you, he begg'd of me.

*Adr.* With what persuasion did he tempt thy love ?

*Luc.* What words that in honest suit might move. 15  
First, he did praise my beauty ; then my speech.

look red or pale ? sad or merry ? From your observation of his face, could you guess about the feelings of his heart ?

*Luc.*—First he denied that you had any right in him.

*Adr.*—He meant that he never acted rightfully by me—the more is my misfortune. \*

*Luc.*—Then he swore that he was a stranger in this place.

*Adr.*—And there he swore truly however false he may be.\*

*Luc.*—Then I interceded with him on your behalf.

*Adr.*—And what did he say in reply ?

*Luc.*—He begged from me the love that I begged of him for you (I urged him to love you ; but he urged me to love him.)

*Adr.*—What efforts did he make to win your love ?

*Luc.*—Well, the words he used might also have been used if his suit had been honest. (In other words, there was nothing wrong with his words ; they were such as might have been used for the purpose of an honest love-making.) First he praised my beauty, and then he praised my discourse.

---

\* Mark the double sense here implied. By saying 'a stranger here' Luciana means—a stranger in this town ; but Adriana wilfully misunderstands her and takes it as meaning 'a stranger in the house.'

*Adr.* Didst speak him fair ?

*Luc.* Have patience, I beseech.

*Adr.* I cannot, nor I will not, hold me still ;  
My tongue, though not my heart, shall have his will. 20  
He is deformed, crooked, old, and sere,  
Ill-faced, worse bodied, shapeless everywhere ;  
Vicious, ungente, foolish, blunt, unkind,  
Stigmatical in making, worse in mind.

*Luc.* Who would be jealous, then, of such a one ? 25  
No evil lost is wail'd when it is gone.

*Adr.* Ah, but I think him better than I say,  
And yet would herein others' eyes were worse.  
Far from her nest the lapwing cries away : *Adrian*  
My heart prays for him though my tongue do curse. 30

*Adr.*—(Ironically) And were you not equally kind to him in reply ?

*Luc.*—Please, don't get so angry.

*Adr.*—I *can't* and I *won't* keep silence. My heart may not have its wish, but I am resolved that my tongue will have its way. I will say then he is ugly, old, withered and bent ; ugly in face, uglier in build, deformed and shapeless in every part of the body ; vicious, rude, cruel and foolish, and his crooked form is (only) an index of his still more crooked mind.

*Luc.*—Well, and if he is so bad as all this, why should you be jealous of him ? No one wails for the loss of an evil thing.

*Adr.*—Ah, but though I paint him in such evil colours, I think better of him at heart ; and I only wish that others could see him as worse even than what I have described him as being.\* He is like the lapwing that flies far away from its nest ; and unfortunate as I am, I mourn for him at heart though I rail at him with my tongue.

\* The trouble with Adriana is that other women think so well of her husband, and she prays that he may appear to these other women as even worse than her imaginary description of him.

*Enter DROMIO of Syracuse.*

*Dro. S.* Here ! go ; the desk, the purse ! sweet mistress, now, make haste.

*Luc.* How hast thou lost thy breath ?

*Dro. S.* By running fast.

*Adr.* Where is thy master, Dromio ? Is he well ? 35

*Dro. S.* No, he's in Tartar limbo, worse than hell :  
A devil in an everlasting garment hath him by the heel ;  
One whose hard heart is button'd up with steel ;  
A fiend, a fury, pitiless and rough ;  
A wolf, nay, worse ; a fellow all in buff ; 40  
A back-friend, a shoulder-clapper, one that countermands  
The passages of alleys, creeks, and narrow lands :

*[Dromio S. enters.]*

*Dro. S.*—(Panting and in great haste) Here mistress, be quick !  
the desk, the purse ! please hurry.

*Luc.*

*Dro. S.*—Well, it is from running quickly.

*Adr.* . . .

*Dro. S.*—No, no, he is far from being well ; he is in prison, in Tartar limbo—a place worse even than Hell. He has been arrested by a devil dressed in leather—one whose hardness of heart is well-indicated by the steel buttons on his coat\*, one who is a very fiend, a fairy, a rough and cruel creature ; a wolf, nay something worse than a wolf ! a fellow dressed in buff—a back-friend,† one who taps on the shoulder from behind and forbids all passage through alleys, lanes and narrow pathways ; a hound

\* One whose hard heart is cased in a garment furnished with steel buttons.

† Note the pun in 'back-friend'. Properly, back-friend would mean an enemy ; but here the officer is called 'back-friend' because he comes to arrest people from behind.

A hound that runs counter, and yet draws dry-foot well,  
 One that before the Judgement, carries poor souls to  
 hell.

*Adr.* Why, man, what is the matter? 45

*Dro. S.* I do not know the matter: he is 'rested on  
 the case.

*Adr.* What, is he arrested? Tell me at whose suit.

*Dro. S.* I know not at whose suit he is arrested well;

that runs back upon its tracks traces and yet can follow scent upon dry  
 ground\*; yea, a person that drags poor people to Hell before judgment  
 is passed.†

*Adr.*—(Apparently taken aback at Dromio's volubility) Why man, what  
 do you mean? What's the matter (with you)?

*Dro. S.*—I do not know what is the matter (with him) but I know  
 that he has been arrested in a case. (In other words, I don't know what he  
 has been arrested for; but the fact of the arrest is known to me.)

*Adr.*—What, arrested! Tell me on whose complaint (suit) .

*Dro. S.*—I do not know upon what suit (complaint) he has been arrested

\* 'Running counter' would be the mark of a foolish beast—a dog that  
 has lost the trace of its quarry; while 'drawing dry foot' would be the  
 mark of a quick hound—a dog that can trace its quarry by scent even upon  
 dry ground where there are no foot-marks. Thus 'running counter' and  
 'drawing dry-foot' would be inconsistent with one another; and this is the  
 point of Dromio's pun. Dromio says—'This hound (meaning the officer)  
 runs counter (alluding to the fact that he is an officer of the counter) and  
 yet at the same time draws dry-foot well.'

† Of course it is only after the day of judgment that people are finally  
 condemned to Hell or sent to Heaven, just as the case may be. But  
*Dro.* says that the bailiff sends persons to hell (i.e. arrests and drags persons  
 jail) even before judgment has been passed against them.

But he's in a suit of buff which rested him, that can I tell.

Will you send him, mistress, redemption, the money in his desk ? 50

*Adr.* Go fetch it, sister. [*Exit Luciana*] This I wonder at,

'That he, unknown to me, should be in debt.

Tell me, was he arrested on a band ?

*Dro. S.* Not on a band, but on a stronger thing .  
A chain , a chain ! Do you not hear it ring ? 55

*Adr.* What, the chain ?

*Dro. S.* No, no, the bell. 'Tis time that I were gone :  
It was two ere I left him, and now the clock strikes one.

but I know that the man who has arrested him is dressed in a suit of buff. Well, mistress, will you send him the money in the desk in order to bail him out ?

*Adr.* —Good sister, do bring the money. And yet I wonder that he should be in debt and I know nothing of it ! Well, tell me, was he arrested on a band (bond) ?

*Dro. S.*—No, he has not been arrested with a band (rope) but with a stronger thing, *viz.* a chain (Apparently exclaiming with a jesture of fear) Don't you hear it ring ?

*Adr.* What ? Hear the chain ? and at this distance :

*Dro. S.*—No, no, I don't mean the chain ; but don't you hear that bell ? (Evidently some bell has rung one.) It is time that we should be going—being that it was two when I left my master while now it is one. †

† Dromio's implication is that the very clocks in this bewitched city had taken to running backwards.

*Adr.* The hours come back ! that did I never hear.

*Dro. S.* O yés ; if an hour meet a sergeant, 'a turns  
back for very fear. 6c

*Adr.* As if 'Time were in debt ! how fondly dost thou  
reason !

*Dro. S.* 'Time is a very bankrupt, and owes more  
than he 's worth to season.

Nay, he's a thief too : have you not heard men say,

'That Time comes stealing on by night and day ?

If time be in debt and theft, and a sergeant in the way, 65

Hath he not reason to turn back an hour in a day ?

*Adr.*—Time running backwrds. Well, I never heard such a thing  
before.

*Dro. S.*—O yes, even time may run backwards. Supposing an hour were  
to meet a sergeant, wouldn't it then turn back from very fear ? \*

*Adr.*—(With much contempt) Yes, as if time were a debtor ! How  
foolishly you talk !

*Dro. S.*—But time is a debtor and a bankrupt-debtor too ? he can never  
repay what he owes to us † And Time is not simply a debtor, he is also a  
thief ; for haven't you heard people say that time *reaps* upon us every  
moment of our lives ? Therefore, since Time is both a thief and a debtor  
wouldn't it run away from fear if it met a sergeant in the path ! (Luciana  
re-enters with the money.)

\* Note the comic exaggeration of fear that Dromio assumes. 'Even  
Time he says 'must be afraid of police Sergeants !'

† Dromio's idea can be thus expressed : All that time can give us  
falls short of what we can expect from time. Thus time's gifts can never  
be equal to time's debts ; and so he must always be a debtor—a bankrupt  
debtor.

‡ The whole of the above passage has been omitted from the university  
text.

*Re-enter LUCIANA with a purse.*

*Adr.* Go, Dromio ; there's the money, bear it straight,  
And bring thy master home immediately.  
Come, sister : I am press'd down with conceit—  
Conceit, my comfort and my injury. [*Exeunt.* ✓ 70

SCENE III. *A public place.*

*Enter ANTIPHOLUS of Syracuse.*

*Ant. S.* There's not a man I meet but doth salute me  
As if I were their well-acquainted friend,  
And every one doth call me by my name.  
Some tender money to me ; some invite me,  
Some other give me thanks for kindness, 5  
Some offer me commodities to buy :  
Even now a tailor call'd me in his shop.  
And show'd me silks that he had bought for me,  
And therewithal took measure of my body.

*Ad.*—There is the money ! Go, Dromio, take it at once to your master  
and bring him home immediately. Come, sister, my heart is weighed  
down with all sorts of fanciful ideas—ideas which are at once my grief  
and my joy.

SCENE 3.

*Ant. S.*—There is not a man here that does not greet me as if I were an  
intimate friend of his ; and all of them address me familiarly by my name.  
Some press gifts of money upon me ; some invite me to their house ; some  
thank me for past kindnesses which I am supposed to have rendered them ;  
and some offer me commodities which I have to purchase. Why, only just  
now, a tailor called me within his shop and showed me samples of silk  
which, he said, he had brought for my use ; and with that he proceeded



Sure, these are but imaginary wiles 10

And I Iapland sorcerers inhabit here.

*Dro* S Master here's the gold you sent me for  
What, have you got the picture of old Adam new  
as paralled?

*Ant* S What gold is this? what Adam do I thou  
me in?

*Dro* S Not that Adam that kept the Paradise, but 15  
that Adam that keeps the prison he that goes in the calf's  
skin that was killed for the Prodigal he that came behind  
you, sir, like an evil angel, and bid you forsake your liberty

*Ant* S I understand thee not.

*Dro* S No? why, tis a plain case he that went, 20  
like a bass viol, in a case of leather, the man, sir, that,  
to measure me for new suit of clothes! Surely these must be the work of  
enchantment and this place must be inhabited by Iapland wizards

*Dro* S enters \*

*Dro* S—Here is the money you ordered me to bring What have  
you succeeded in shaking off that incarnation of Adam in a new suit of  
clothes

*Ant* S—What money is this What Adam are you speaking of

*Dro* S—Not that Adam who kept Paradise in former times but the  
Adam who keeps the prison now, he who is dressed in a suit of calf-skin  
which is apparently the skin of the calf that was killed for the prodigal  
yea the man that came upon you from behind like an evil angel and bade  
you give up your liberty

*Ant* S—I don't understand what you mean

*Dro* S—And yet my meaning is plain! I am talking of the man  
who resembles a bass-viol, for he is dressed in a suit of leather just a

\* It should be noted that Dromio had been sent to bring money, not by  
his own master but by Ant E. However, on seeing his own master, he  
naturally mistakes him for the man who had sent him to bring the money  
to purchase his freedom—and thus there is a new source of confusion

when gentlemen are tired, gives them a bob and 'rests them', he, sir, that takes pity on decayed men, and gives them suits of durance; he that sets up his rest to do more exploits with his mace than a morris-pike. 25

*Ant. S.* What, thou meanest an officer?

*Dro. S.* Ay, sir, the sergeant of the band, he that brings any man to answer it that breaks his band, one that thinks a man always going to bed, and says 'God give you good rest!' 30

*Ant. S.* Well, sir, there rest in your foolery. Is there any ship puts forth to-night? may we be gone?

a bass-viol is kept in a case of leather, the man who taps tired gentlemen upon their shoulder, and arrests them (also meaning, gives tired people a shilling and thus allows them some rest) he who takes pity upon poor men and gives them prison-clothes to wear (also meaning he who takes pity upon men that have worn out their clothes and gives them suits that will last); the man who is apparently resolved to do more with his mace than soldiers can do with their morris-pikes.

*Ant. S.*—What, are you speaking of the sergeant?

*Dro. S.*—Yes, sir, I mean the troop-sergeant (sergeant of the band)—he who takes people to task for breaking their band (failing to discharge their *band*), he who seeks to give people *rest* (to *arrest* them) as if they were always on the point of going to bed. \*

*Ant. S.*—Well, sir, stop (rest†) there in your jesting. † Does any ship leave this port to-night? Shall we get an opportunity of leaving this place?

\* Dromio means (if there is meaning at all in his foolery)—'This officer apparently thinks that people are always on the point of going to bed, otherwise why should he always wish them rest?' Evidently the pun, such as it is, is upon *rest* and *arrest*. The officer is said to *wish people rest* because he *arrests* them.

† Dromio has been ringing so many changes upon *rest* and *arrest* that Antipholus also falls into the humour—'Since you have been talking so much of rest—well, rest (stop) there in your joke.'

*Dro. S.* Why, sir, I brought you word an 'hour since that the bark *Expedition* put forth to-night; and then were you hindered by the sergeant to tarry for the hoy *Delay*. 35  
Here are the angels that you sent for to deliver you.

*Ant. S.* The fellow is distract, and so am I;  
And here we wander in illusions:  
Some blessed power deliver us from hence!

*Enter a Courtesan.*

*Cour.* Well met, well met, Master Antipholus. 40  
I see, sir, you have found the goldsmith now:  
Is that the chain you promised me to-day?

*Ant. S.* Satan, avoid! I charge thee, tempt me not.

*Dro. S.*—Why, sir, I brought you information about an hour ago that the ship *Expedition* was starting to-night but you were then detained by the sergeant who apparently persuaded you to wait for the vessel *Delay*.  
Meanwhile here is the money which you wanted in order that you might be released on bail

*Ant. S.*—This fellow has gone mad and so have I! We seem to be both wandering in a world of delusions. May some blessed saint deliver us in safety!

*A Courtesan enters!*

*Cour.*—It is fortunate that I have met you, master Antipholus.  
(Pointing to the chain which Antipholus was wearing on his neck) Evidently, you have found your Goldsmith; for that surely is the chain which you promised to give me to-day.

*Ant. S.*—Get thee away from me, Satan! Do not tempt me, I command you.

\* Again, notice the pun upon the words *Expedition* and *Delay*. Evidently, the name of the first bark was *Expedition*, but of course the name '*Delay*' is entirely metaphorical.

*Dro. S.* Master, is this mistress Satan ?

*Ant. S.* It is the devil.

45

*Dro. S.* Nay, she is worse, she is the devil's dam ?  
and here she comes in the habit of a light wench and  
thereof comes that the wenches say, 'God damn me' ; that's  
as much to say 'God make me a light wench.' It is written,  
they appear to me like angels of light : light is an effect 50  
of fire, and fire will burn , ergo, light wenches will burn  
Come not near her.

*Cour.* Your man and you are marvellous merry, so  
Will you go with me ? We'll mend our dinner here ?

*Dro. S.*—Master, you address her as Satan ! But Satan was a male ,  
so, may I take it that she is Mrs. Satan ?

*Ant. S.*—She is the devil incarnate.

*Dro. S.*—O no, she is worse than a devil, she is the devil's wife ; and  
here she comes in the form of a loose woman. And now I understand why  
the girls say 'God dam(n) me.' Evidently they wish to be turned into  
loose women.\* Also it is written that these loose women should appear  
like angels of light (i.e. persons of surpassing loveliness.) Now light is  
an effect of fire and fire will burn ; therefore, if loose women are creatures  
of light, it means that they will burn. Therefore, do not come near them  
for fear lest you should be burnt.

*Court.*—Both you and your servant appear to be very facetious. Come,  
won't you go to my house ? Won't you take some food there ?

\* Dromio makes his point thus. When the wenches say 'God damn me,' they mean 'God make a dam of me'. Now here is this devil's dam coming in the form of a light wench, so that the wenches—when they say 'God damn me'—evidently want to be changed into loose women

*Dro. S.* Master, if you do, expect spoon-meat ; or  
 ne speak a long spoon. 55

*Ant. S.* Why Dromio ?

*Dro. S.* Marry, he must have a long spoon that must  
 eat with the devil.

*Ant. S.* Avoid, thou fiend ! What tell'st thou me of  
 supping ?

Thou art, as you are all, a sorceress :

I conjure thee to leave me, and be gone. 60

*Cour.* Give me the ring of mine you had at dinner,

Or, for my diamond, the chain you promised,

And I'll be gone, sir, and not trouble you.

*Dro. S.* Some devils ask but the parings of one's  
 nail,

A rush, a hair, a drop of blood, a . . . 65  
 . . . a in, a nut, a cherry-stone .

*Dro. S.*—Master, if you do so, then you must expect to get spoon-meat  
 for your food. And you must provide yourself with a long spoon from  
 beforehand.\*

*Ant. S.*—Why, Dromio, why must I have a long spoon ?

*Dro. S.*—Marry, because he who sups with the devil must have a long  
 spoon, and this creature is the devil incarnate !

*Ant. S.*—(Again turning to the Courtesan) Get thee away, you devil !  
 Why do you talk to me about supping and eating ? You are sorcerers one  
 and all, and I conjure you to get away and leave me !

*Cour.*—Oh, I shall get away this very moment, but you must first give  
 me the ring that you took from me at dinner. Either that or the chain that  
 you promised to give me in exchange !

*Dro. S.*—Some devils are content with little. they want only the  
 parings of one's nails, a straw, a hair, a nut, a cherry-stone or some

\* The reference in both these expressions is to the common proverb that  
 he who sups with the devil must have a long spoon. Dromio makes his  
 point thus : 'If it is necessary to have a spoon for eating with the devil,  
 then it follows that the devil only eats spoon-meat.'

But she, more covetous, would have a chain.

Master, be wise : an if you give it her,

The devil will shake her chain and fright us with it.

*Cour.* I pray you, sir, my ring, or else the chain : 70

I hope you do not mean to cheat me so.

*Ant. S.* Avaunt, thou witch ! Come, Dromio, let us go.

*Dro. S.* 'Fly pride,' says the peacock : Mistress, that you know.

[*Exeunt. Ant. S. and Dro. S.*

*Cour.* Now, out of doubt, Antipholus is mad,

Else would he never so demean himself. 75

A ring he hath of mine worth forty ducats,

And for the same he promised me a chain .

Both one and other he denies me now.

other trifle like that ' But here is one greedier than the rest who wants to have a chain ' Master, be warned in time If you give her a chain, then you will be giving a chain to the devil ; and then it will so happen that the devil will shake this chain and thus seek to frighten us.

*Cour.* —I must have one thing or the other—either my ring or the chain in lieu of the ring. I hope, you won't cheat me like this

*Ant. S.* . . .

*Dro. S.*—Don't you know the proverb that it is the peacock that cries shame upon pride ?\* [*Ant. S. and Dro. S. go away.*]

*Cour.*—Now, surely, this Antipholus has gone mad, or he would never behave so meanly as this He took from me a ring worth forty ducats promising to give me a chain in exchange ; and yet now he refuses to give either the chain or the ring. The only reason for such conduct must be that he has gone mad. And as a proof of his madness, apart from his

\* Dromio's idea is this : The peacock is a proud bird and yet it is she that cries shame upon pride. And so you are a cheat and witch itself ; and yet you abuse my master for cheating !

The reason that I gather he is mad, .  
 Besides this present instance of his rage, 80  
 Is a mad tale he told to-day at dinner,  
 Of his own doors being shut against his entrance.  
 Belike, his wife, acquainted with his fits,  
 On purpose shut the doors against his way.  
 My way is now to hie home to his house, 85  
 And tell his wife that, being lunatic,  
 He rush'd into my house and took perforce  
 My ring away. This course I fittest choose ;  
 For forty ducats is too much to lose- [Exit

SCENE IV. *A street.*

*Enter ANTIPHOLUS of Ephesus and the Officer.*

*Ant. E.* Fear me not, man ; I will not break away :  
 I 'll give thee, ere I leave thee, so much money,  
 To warrant thee, as I am 'rested for.  
 My wife is in a wayward mood to-day,

present rage, there was the fantastic story which he told me at dinner  
 about his being shut out from his own door. Well, probably his wife,  
 knowing the nature of his madness, deliberately shut the door against him.--  
 In any case, my only course is to do this. I must go to his house and tell  
 his wife that her husband rushed into my house in a fit of madness and  
 took away my ring by force. This is the best course that I can choose,  
 for I cannot afford to lose a matter of forty ducats.

SCENE 4.

*Int. S.*—(Addressing the officer) Don't be afraid, man, don't think that  
 I shall run away : In order to furnish sufficient bail, I shall give you ere  
 I leave as much money as I have been arrested for. My wife is rather  
 cross and obstinate to-day and hence perhaps is making some difficulty about

And will not lightly trust the messenger | 5  
 That I should be attach'd in Ephesus,  
 I tell you, 'twill sound harshly in her ears.

*Enter DROMIO of Ephesus with a rope's-end.*

Here comes my man : I think he brings the money.  
 How now, sir ! have you that I sent you for ?

*Dro. E.* Here's that, I warrant you, will pay them  
 all. 10

*Ant. E.* But where's the money ?

*Dro. E.* Why, sir, I gave the money for the rope ?

*Ant. E.* Five hundred ducats, villain, for a rope ?

*Dro. E.* I 'll serve you, sir, five hundred at the rate.

entrusting the messenger with so much money. But certainly it would give her a rude shock to hear that I have been arrested in this town of Ephesus. (*Dro. E.* enters with the rope's end which he had been ordered to buy and is mistaken for Dromio S. who had been sent to fetch the money.) Here is my servant, and I think he has brought the money. How now, sir ? Have you got what I sent you for ?

*Dro. E.*—Yes, and I am quite sure that they will all be amply paid\* repaid ; punished) by what I have got.

*Ant. E.* . . .

*Dro. E.*—Why, I spent the money in buying this rope.\*

*Ant. E.*—What, villain, did you spend five hundred ducats upon a rope ?

*Dro. E.*—Ah ! if that were the price of a rope, then I should gladly purchase five-hundred such ropes for you.†

\* Note how *Ant. E.*'s delusion is kept up by the words 'pay them all.' By 'paying them' Dromio means—requiting them, teaching them a good lesson ; but Antipholus of course takes the words in their literal sense.

† The idea is this.—'If you are willing to pay at the rate of five hundred ducats for each rope, then I shall gladly purchase five hundred such ropes for you at that rate'. Of course, he means that he would make a huge commission out of such a job.



*Ant. E.* To what end did I bid thee hie thee home ? 15

*Dro. E.* To a rope's-end sir ; and to that end am I returned.

*Ant. E.* And to that end, sir, I will welcome you.

[*Beating him.*]

*Off.* Good sir, be patient.

*Dro. E.* Nay, 'tis for me to be patient, I am in adversity.

*Off.* Good now, hold thy tongue. 20

*Dro. E.* Nay, rather persuade him to hold his hands.

*Ant. E.* Thou whoreson, senseless villain !

*Dro. E.* I would I were senseless, sir, that I might not feel your blows.

*Ant. E.* Thou art sensible in nothing but blows, and so is an ass.

*Ant. E.*—With what object did I ask you to hasten home ?

*Dro. E.*—Why sir, it was with the object of purchasing a rope's end and that is what I have done.

*Ant. E.*—Ah, you have done that, have you ? Then, here is the payment for it ! (beats him.)

*Officer.* . . .

*Dro. E.*—Why do you ask *him* to be patient ? Rather, it is for *me* to be patient seeing that it is I who am suffering at his hands

*Officer.*—Well, well, hold thy peace (keep silent.)

*Dro. E.*—Nay, instead of asking me to hold my peace, ask him to hold his hands.

*Ant. E.*—Thou bastard, thou foolish (senseless) villain.

*Dro. E.*—I wish, sir, that I were literally senseless (without the capacity of feeling) for in that case I would not feel your blows.

*Ant. E.*—It seems that you can feel nothing except blows and so you must be an ass.

*Dro. E.* I am an ass, indeed, you may prove it by, 25  
 my long ears. I have served him from the hour of my  
 nativity to this instant, and have nothing at his hands for  
 my service but blows. When I am cold, he heats me with  
 beating: when I am warm, he cools me with beating. I am  
 waked with it, when I sleep: raised with it, when I sit, 30  
 driven out of doors with it, when I go from home, wel-  
 comed home with it, when I return: nay, I bear it on my  
 shoulders, as a beggar wont her brat, and, I think, when  
 he hath lamed me, I shall beg with it from door to door.

*Ant. E.* Come, go along; my wife is coming yonder. 35

*Enter ADRIANA, LUCIAN, the Courtezan, and PINCH.*

*Dro. E.* Mistress, 'respice finem,' respect your end,  
 rather, to prophesy like the parrot, 'beware the rope's  
 end.'

*Dro. E.*—To judge from my long ears I must surely be an ass.—  
 (Addressing the world in general) I have been serving this man from my  
 birth till this moment and blows are all the reward that I have got for my  
 service. When I am cold, he beats me in order to make hot; and when  
 I am hot, he beats me in order to cool me down. When I am asleep he  
 beats me in order to wake me up, and when I am seated he beats me  
 in order to make me get up. He beats me when I go out and he beats me  
 when I come in, and I think I shall always bear his beating on my  
 shoulders even as the beggar bears his brat—And when he has lamed me  
 with his beating, I think it is his beating which will enable me to beg from  
 door to door.

*Ant. E.*...

(Adriana, Luciana and the Courtezan enter accompanied by a lean  
 school-master named Pinch who also acts as a witch-doctor.)

*Dro. E.*—Mistress, do not come near, have some consideration for your  
 person. Yea, if I were speaking like a parrot I should say 'beware of the  
 rope's end' (i. e. beware of being beaten by a rope's end.)

\* The parrot, when it cries 'beware the rope's end', means 'beware of  
 being hanged' 'beware that you don't come to a bad end as you are quite  
 likely to do.' But, of course, Dromio means 'beware of being beaten by  
 a rope's end'.

*Ant. E.* Wilt thou still talk ? [Beating him.

*Cour.* How say you now ? is not your husband mad ?

*Adr.* His incivility confirms no less. 40

Good Doctor Pinch you are a conjurer ;

Establish him in his true sense again,

And I will please you what you will demand.

*Luc.* Alas, how fiery and how sharp he looks !

*Cour.* Mark, how he trembles in his ecstasy ? 45

*Pinch.* Give me your hand and let me feel your pulse

*Ant. E.* There is my hand, and let it feel your ear.

[Striking him.

*Pinch.* I charge thee, Satan, hoard within this man,

To yield possession to my holy prayers,

And to thy state of darkness hie thee straight . 50

I conjure thee by all the saints in heaven !

*Ant. E.* Peace, doting wizard, peace ! I am not mad.

*Ant. S.*—What, you will still persist in talking ! (Beats him).

*Courtesan*—(Drawing Adriana's attention to this beating of Dio E.)  
What do you say now ? Doesn't that prove my words to be true ? Does it not show that your husband is mad ?

*Adriana*—Yes, his rudeness proves as much. Good doctor Pinch, restore him to his proper senses, and I will pay you as much money as you require.

*Luc.*—Alas, how angry and bitter he looks !

*Cour.*—Mark how he trembles in his madness.

*Pinch*—(Assuming his best doctor's manner) .

*Ant. E.*—Ah, you want my hand ? Well, here it is. Feel it upon your ear. (Beats Pinch.)

*Pinch*—Thou devil that lodgest within the body of this man, I bid thee avaunt and go back at once to the realm of darkness where thou livest. I conjure thee in the name of all the saints of heaven.

*Ant. E.*—Peace, thou foolish Doctor, I am not mad.

*Adr.* O, that thou wert not, poor distressed soul ?

*Ant. E.* You minion, you, are these your customers ?

Did this companion with the saffron face 55

Revel and feast it at my house to-day,

Whilst upon me the guilty doors were shut,

And I denied to enter in my house ?

*Adr.* O husband, God doth know, you dined at home,  
Where would you had remain'd until this time, 60  
Free from these slanders and this open shame !

*Ant. E.* Dined at home ! Thou, villian, what sayest  
thou ?

*Dro. E.* Sir, sooth to say, you did not dine at home.

*Ant. E.* Were not my doors lock'd up, and I shut  
out ?

*Adr.* — Alas, poor unfortunate creature, how I wish that you were  
mad !

*Ant. E.* — You shameless girl, are these your friends ? Were you  
feasting and merry-making with this yellow-faced rogue while the door  
of my own house was shut in my face and I forbidden to enter !

*Adr.* — Husband, God knows that you *did dine* with me to-day ; and  
if you had remained there till now, you would have been saved from this  
open disgrace and ignominy.

*Ant. E.* — I dine at home ! (*Turning to Dro. E.*) Well, sir, you rogue,  
what do you say to this ?

*Dro. E.* — Sir, to tell the truth you did not dine at home.\*

*Ant. E.* — Were not my doors locked and I shut out ?

\* See how the conversation is so managed as to make it appear as if  
Dromio is thus replying to his master only to keep him in good humour.  
Dromio, it will be noticed, repeats the very words of his master—thus  
leading his audience to think that he is speaking in this way only in order  
to suit the mad humour of Ant. E.

*Dro. E.* Perdye, your doors were lock'd, and you  
shut out. 65

*Ant. E.* And did not she herself revile me there ?

*Dro. E.* Sans fable, she herself reviled you there.

*Ant. E.* Did not her kitchen-maid rail, taunt, and  
scorn me ?

*Dro. E.* Certes, she did . the kitchen-vestal scorn'd  
you.

*Ant. E.* And did not I in rage depart from thence ? 70

*Dro. E.* In venty, you did . my bones bear witness,  
That since have felt the vigour of his rage.

*Adr.* Is't good to soothe him in these contraries ?

*Pinch.* It is no shame : the fellow finds his vein,  
And, yielding to him, humours well his frenzy. 75

*Ant. E.* Thou hast suborn'd the goldsmith to arrest  
me.

*Dro. E.*—Yea, upon God, your doors were locked and you shut out

*Ant. E.*—And did not this woman roundly abuse us there ?

*Dro. E.*—Yea, to speak the truth, she did revile you there.

*Ant. E.*—Also, did not her kitchen-maid abuse and sneer at us ?

*Dro. E.*—Well, she did. The kitchen girl did sneer at you.

*Ant. E.*—And didn't we come away from the place in anger ?

*Dro. E.*—In truth, we did. My bones can bear witness to that, seeing  
that I felt the full burden of your rage

*Adr.*—Is it good thus to humour him in the matter of his madness ?

*Pinch.*—Certainly it is not bad. This fellow has found out his humour  
and therefore can soothe him in his frantic mood by pretending to give  
in to his wishes

*Ant. E.*—(Speaking to Adriana) You have bribed the goldsmith to  
arrest me

*Adr.* Alas, I sent you money to redeem you,  
By Dromio here, who came in haste for it.

*Dro. E.* Money by me ' heart 'and good-will you  
might ,

But, surely, master, not a rag of money. 80

*Ant. E.* Went'st not thou to her for a purse of  
ducats ?

*Adr.* He came to me, and I deliver'd it.

*Luce.* And I am witness with her that she did

*Dro. E.* And, God and the rope-maker bear me witness,  
That I was sent for nothing but a rope ! 85

*Pinch.* Mistress, both man and master is possess'd ,  
I know it by their pale and deadly looks :  
They must be bound, and laid in some dark room.

*Ant. E.* Say, wherefore didst thou look me forth  
to-day ?

And why dost thou deny the bag of gold ? 90

*Adr.* - Alas, so far from helping to arrest you, I sent you money in  
order to procure your release, by Dromio here who came to bring it.

*Dro. E.*—You send money by me ? Sympathy and good wishes you  
may have sent, but most surely never a stiver of money.

*Ant. E.*—Didn't you go and ask a thousand ducats from her ?

*Adr.*—(Anticipating Dromio) Certainly he did ; and what is more, I  
gave him the money.

*Luce.*—And I can bear witness to the truth of that.

*Dro. E.*—And God and the rope-maker can bear witness that I was  
asked only to bring a rope and nothing more.

*Pinch.*—Mistress, they are both possessed by evil spirits—both master  
and man I can guess it from their pale and disordered looks. The only  
remedy is that they must be tied securely and kept in a dark room.

*Ant. E.*—(Addressing his wife) Say, why did you shut me out by  
locking the door against me ? (Turning to Dromio) And why do you deny  
having received the bag of gold ?

*Adr.* I did not, gentle husband, lock thee forth.

*Dro. E.* And, gentle master, I received no gold :  
But I confess, sir, that we were lock'd out.

*Adr.* Dissembling villain ! thou speak'st false in  
both.

*Ant E.* Dissembling harlot ! thou art false in all 95  
And art confederate with a damned pack  
To make a loathsome abject scorn of me .  
But with these nails I'll pluck out these false eyes  
That would behold in me this shameful sport.

*Enter three or four, and offer to bind him. He strives*

*Adr.* O, bind him, bind him ! let him not come  
near me. 100

*Pinch* More company ! The fiend is strong within  
him.

*Luc* Ay, me ! poor man, how pale and wan he  
looks !

*Adr.*—Gentle husband, certainly I did not lock you out

*Dro. E.*—And gentle master, certainly I did not receive any gold. But  
I can bear witness that you and I were both locked out.

*Adr.*—Thou false rogue, both thy statements are false

*Ant. E.*—Thou false harlot, it is thou that art false in everything. Thou  
hast conspired with a rascally pack and thy object is, to make a miserable  
mock of me ; but I shall pluck out with my nails those treacherous eyes  
which delight to witness this shameful plight of mine.

(Three or four persons enter and attempt to bind Ant. E. He struggles  
against the attempt.)

*Adr.*—O bind him safe, do not let him approach near me.

*Pinch*—What ho ! some more men are needed for this work. The devil  
within him is very strong and won't let itself be easily bound.

*Luc.*—(Pityingly) Alas, how pale and bloodless he looks !

*Ant. E.* What, wilt thou murder me? Thou gaoler,  
thou,  
I am thy prisoner : wilt thou suffer them  
To make a rescue ? 105

*Off.* Masters, let him go .  
He is my prisoner, and you shall not have him.

*Pinch.* Go bind this man, for he is frantic too.

[*They offer to bind Dro E.*

*Adr.* What wilt thou do, thou peevish officer ?  
Hast thou delight to see a wretched man 110  
Do outrage and displeasure to himself ?

*Off.* He is my prisoner, if I let him go,  
The debt he owes will be required of me.

*Adr.* I will discharge thee, ere I go from thee  
Bear me forthwith unto his creditor, 115  
And, knowing how the debt grows, I will pay it.

*Ant. E.*—What, do you want to murder me then ? You fellow you  
jaoler. I am your prisoner ; and will you allow them to snatch me away  
from your custody ?

*Officer*—Mistress, he is my prisoner and you must not take him away  
So, let him go.

*Pinch*—Come, let us bind the servant also, for he too is mad

*Adr.*—(*Remonstrates with the officer for having refused them permission  
to bind Ant. E.*) What do you want, you foolish jailor ? Do you take  
any delight in seeing this mad man expose himself to shame and ridicule .

*Officer*—All that I know is that he is my prisoner ; and if I allow him  
to be rescued, it is I who shall have to pay the debts that he owes

*Adr.*—Well, before I leave I shall see that you don't suffer any loss.  
Come, take me to his creditor ; and after I have ascertained how he came



(Good master doctor, see him safe convey'd  
Home to my house. O most unhappy day !

*Ant. E.* O most unhappy strumpet !

*Dro. E.* Master, I am here enter'd in bond for you. 120

*Ant. E.* Out on thee, villain ! wherefore dost thou  
mad me ?

*Dro. E.* Will you be bound for nothing ? be mad,  
good master ; cry "The devil" !

*Luc.* God help, poor souls ! how idly do they talk !

*Adr.* Go, hear him hence. Sister, go you with me.

[*Exeunt all but Adriana, Luciana, Officer and  
Courtesan.*

Say now, whose suit is he arrested at ? 125

*Off.* One Angelo, a goldsmith ; do you know him ?

to incur this debt, I shall pay in full. Meanwhile, good doctor Pinch,  
see that he is safely conveyed to our house.

*Ant. E.*—O most wretched strumpet !

*Dro. E.*—Master, here am I, bound for your sake. \*

*Ant. E.*—Shame upon you, you rogue ! why do you provoke me still  
further ! (Why do you persist in treating me as mad ?)

*Dro. E.*—Well, why not ? Do you want to be bound for nothing, for  
no cause ? (Seeing that you must be bound, why not give cause for being  
bound ?) Please be mad therefore ; cry "The devil".

*Luc.*—God help them, unhappy creatures ! how foolish and unmeaning  
is their talk !

*Adr.*— Tell me at whose instance he has been arrested

*(Officer . . . . .)*

\* Note the double meaning in the expression : (1) I have been bound  
(tied) for your fault ; (2) I have been bound, i. e. made to stand security  
for you.

*Adr.* I know the man. What is the sum he owes ?

*Off.* Two hundred ducats.

*Adr.* Say, how grows it due ?

*Off.* Due for a chain your husband had of him 130

*Adr.* He did bespeak a chain for me, but had it not.

*Cour.* When as your husband, all in rage, to-day  
Came to my house, and took away my ring—  
The ring I saw upon his finger now—  
Straight after did I meet him with a chain. 135

*Adr.* It may be so, but I did never see it.  
Come, gaoler, bring me where the goldsmith is  
I long to know the truth hereof at large.

*Enter ANTIPHOLUS of Syracuse with his rapier  
drawn, and DROMIO of Syracuse.*

*Luc.* God, for thy mercy ! they are loose again.

*Adr.*

*Officer.* ....

*Adr.*—Say, how did he incur this debt ?

*Officer.*—It is said that the debt is due for a chain which your husband  
got from him.

*Adr.*—Ah, I remember that my husband *did* order a chain from, but  
he never got it.

*Cour.*—When your husband entered my house to-day in a fit of madness  
and took away my ring from me—the very same ring that I noticed upon  
his finger now—well, shortly afterwards, I saw a chain upon his neck.

*Adr.*—Come, jailor, take me to the goldsmith and I shall know more  
particulars of this matter.

(*Ant. S. and Dromio S. enter with swords drawn*)

*Luc.*—(Taking them for her sister's husband and his servant.) God  
have mercy upon them ! those people have broken loose again !

*Adr.* And come with naked swords. 140  
 Let's call more help to have them bound again.  
*Off.* Away ! they'll kill us.

*Exeunt all but Ant. S. and Dro. S.*

*Ant. S.* I see, these witches are afraid of swords.  
*Dro. S.* She that would be your wife now ran from  
 you.  
*Ant. S.* Come to the Centaur . fetch our stuff from  
 thence : 145

I long that we were safe and sound aboard.

*Dro. S.* Faith, stay here this night, they will surely  
 do us no harm : you saw they speak us fair, give us  
 gold. Methinks they are such a gentle nation that, but  
 for the mountain of mad flesh that claims marriage of 150  
 me. I could find in my heart to stay here still and turn  
 witch.

*Adr.* And they come with swords drawn ! Let us call more people to  
 our assistance to get them bound again.

*Officiaries*—Let us run away first or they will kill us.

[All of them run away except Ant. S. and his servant.]

*Ant. S.*—I now see that, witches as these women may be, they are  
 (yet) afraid of the drawn sword.

*Dro. S.*—Yes, the woman that was claiming you as her husband now  
 ran away from your presence.

*Ant. S.*—Well, let us come to our Inn and carry from there our goods  
 and luggage. I wish that we were safe on board our ship.

*Dro. S.*—Faith, let us stop here for one night more. Surely, the  
 people can't harm us now—(seeing that they are afraid of the drawn sword)  
 You see they speak very fairly to us and even offer gold to us. Yea, they  
 are so courteous and well-mannered that—but for that monstrous fat woman  
 who claimed to be my wife—I could even wish to remain here always  
 and turn a wizard like themselves.

*Ant. S.* I will not stay to-night for all the town :  
Therefore away, to get our stuff aboard.

*Exeunt.*

## ACT V.

SCENE I. *A street before a Priory.*

*Enter SECOND MERCHANT and ANGELO.*

*Ang.* I am sorry, sir, that I have hinder'd you .  
But, I protest, he had the chain of me,  
Though most dishonestly he doth deny it.

*Sec. Mer.* How is the man esteem'd here in the  
city ?

*Ang.* Of very reverend reputation, sir,  
Of credit infinite, highly beloved,  
Second to none that lives here in the city :  
His word might bear my wealth at any time.

*Ant. S.*—I will not stay here to-night even for all the wealth of the  
city. Go therefore, and get our luggage on board.

## ACT V.

SCENE I.

*Ang.*—I am sorry, Sir, that I have been the cause of delaying your  
voyage. But I protest that this man really got the chain from me, though  
now he is shameless and dishonest enough to deny it.

*Sec. Mer.*—What sort of reputation does the man bear in this city ?

*Ang.*—O, he bears a most excellent reputation, enjoys great credit,  
and is very popular. In fact, he is second to none in point of consideration.  
Yea, his bare word would persuade me to part with all my wealth (I could  
advance him all my wealth upon his bare word without any security.)

*Sec. Mer.* Speak softly : yonder, as I think, he walks.

*Enter ANTIPHOLUS of Syracuse and DROMIO of Syracuse.*

*Ang.* 'Tis so : and that self chain about his neck 10  
Which he forswore most monstrously to have.  
(Good sir, draw near to me, I'll speak to him .  
Signior Antipholus, I wonder much  
That you would put me to this shame and trouble :  
And, not without some scandal to yourself, 15  
With circumstance and oaths so to deny  
This chain, which now you wear so openly :  
Beside the charge, the shame, imprisonment,  
You have done wrong to this my honest friend,  
Who, but for staying on our controversy, 20  
Had hoisted sail and put to sea to-day.  
This chain you had of me , can you deny it ?

*Sec. Mer.*—Well, speak low ; for yonder is the man himself.

(*Ant. S. and Dro. S. enter.*)

*Ang.*—That is so ; and you see he bears upon his neck the chain which he denied having received from me so impudently only now.—Good Sir, please come along with me and I will tax him in your very presence.—Sir, Antipholus, I marvel very much that you put me to so much shame and trouble and at the same time brought such discredit upon yourself by denying that you had received this chain from me and yet that you should now wear it so openly in public ! Besides the shame, loss and imprisonment which you have caused to me by this conduct, you have done some injury to this honest gentleman also ; for he would have set sail and started on his voyage to-day if he had not been delayed by our quarrel. Can you deny it now that you *did* receive this chain from me ?

*Ant. S.* I think, I had ; I never did deny it.

*Sec. Mer.* Yes, that you did, sir, and forswore it too.

*Ant. S.* Who heard me to deny it or forswear it ?

*Sec. Mer.* These ears of mine, thou knew'st, did  
hear thee, swear it.

Fie on thee, wretch ! 'tis pity thou liv'st  
To walk where any honest men resort.

*Ant. S.* Thou art a villain to impeach me thus :  
I'll prove mine honour and mine honesty  
Against thee presently, if thou darest stand

*Sec. Mer.* I dare, and do defy thee for a villain.

[*They draw*

*Enter ADRIANA, LUCIANA, the Courtezan and others*

*Adr.* Hold ! hurt him not, for God's sake ! he is mad,

*Ant. S.*

*Sec. Mer.* — Yea, sir, but you did deny it—and that upon your oath

*Ant. S.* —Who is it that heard me do so ?

*Sec. Mer.*—Well, you know very well that I heard it myself with  
these ears of mine. Shame upon you, you wretch ! It is a pity that you  
should live and walk about in a place where honest men gather

*Ant. S.*—You are a villain to bring such a foul charge against me, and  
if you dare stand up against me (if you venture to fight a duel with me) I  
shall prove my honour and honesty with my sword.

*Sec. Mer.*—I do dare to stand up against you ; and hereby I defy you  
for a villain. (They draw their swords and are about to fight).

(Adriana, Luciana, the courtezan and other people enter)

*Adr.*—(Addressing the merchant who is about to fight with *Ant. S.*)  
Hold, do not hurt him for God's sake for the man is mad. Let some one

Some get within him, take his sword away,  
Bind Dromio too, and bear them to my house. 35

*Dro. S.* Run, master, run; for God's sake take a  
house!

'This is some priory: In, or we are spoil'd!

*Exeunt Ant. S. and Dro S. to the Priory*

*Enter the Lady Abbess.*

*Abb.* Be quiet, people. Wherefore throng you hither?

*Adr.* To fetch my poor distracted husband hence.

Let us come in, that we may bind him fast, 40  
And bear him home for his recovery.

*Ang.* I knew he was not in his perfect wits.

*Sec. Mer.* I am sorry now that I did draw on him.

*Abb.* How long hath this possession held the man?

go within his guard\* and deprive him of his weapon. Bind his servant also and convey them both to my house.

*Dro. S.*—Run, master, run. 'Take sanctuary for God's sake! This building, I think, must be some Priory; let us enter here or we shall be quite undone.

*(The lady Abbess enters.)*

*Abbess.*—Silence good people. 'Why do you crowd so in this place?

*Adr.*—I have come to take away my poor mad husband from here. Please allow us to enter so that we may bind him securely and bear him home in order that his wits may be restored.

*Ang.*—(Mad—is he?) Well, I guessed that he was not in the perfect possession of his senses.

*Sec. Mer.*—I am sorry now that I drew my sword against him.

*Abb.*—How long has he been possessed with this spirit of madness?

\* A fencing phrase. To get within a man's guard is to evade his guard, to get past his guard, and approach him at close quarters.

*Adr.* This week he hath been heavy, sour, sad, 45  
 And much different from the man he was :  
 But, till this afternoon, his passion \*  
 Ne'er brake into extremity of rage.

*Abb.* Hath he not lost much wealth by wreck of sea ?  
 Buried some dear friend ? Hath not else his eye 50  
 Stray'd his affection in unlawful love ?  
 A sin prevailing much in youthful men,  
 Who give their eyes the liberty of gazing.  
 Which of these sorrows is he subject to ?

*Adr.* To none of these, except it be the last . 55  
 Namely, some love, that drew him oft from home

*Abb.* You should for that have reprehended him

*Adr.* Why, so I did. \*

*Abb.* Ay, but not rough enough.

*Idr.* —Well, he has been morose, gloomy, and melancholy all this week and very different from her usual self. But till this afternoon his madness never broke out in a violent form.

*Abb.* —What is the cause of his trouble ? Has he lost his fortune in a shipwreck ? Has he lost any dear friend by death, or has he been lured into the paths of unholy love by the attraction of the senses ? I find this last sin very prevalent among young men who allow their eyes to rove from object to object, (who allow their eyes the liberty of gazing upon all sorts of women.) Which of these misfortunes does he suffer from ?

*Adr.* —I think that he suffers from none of them except perhaps the last, yea probably there is some strange love which often lures him away from home.

*Abb.* —But you ought to have taken him to task for this fault.

*Adr.*

*Abb.* —Ah ! but perhaps you were not severe enough in your reproaches ?

\* Mark the Socratic irony of method by which the lady Abbess draws out Adriana. By pretending to fell in with her humour, she leads her to confess her ill treatment of her husband, and then pounces suddenly upon her and rebukes her roundly.



*Adr.* As roughly as my modesty would let me ! 60

*Abb.* Haply, in private.

*Adr.* And in assemblies too.

*Abb.* Ay, but not enough.

*Adr.* It was the copy of our conference :

In bed, he slept not for my urging it ; 65

At board, he fed not for my urging it ,

Alone, it was the subject of my theme ,

In company, I often glanced it :

Still did I tell him it was vile and bad.

*Abb.* And thereof came it that the man was mad 70

'The venom clamours of a jealous woman

Poisons more deadly than a mad dog's tooth.

It seems, his sleeps were hinder'd by thy railing,

And thereof comes it that his head is light.

*Adr.*—Oh, I rebuked him as severely as modesty would permit.

*Abb.*—Ay, but perhaps you rebuked him only in private ?

*Adr.*—Nay, I rebuked him also in the presence of others.

*Abb.*—Ay, but perhaps you did not rebuke him often enough

*Adr.*—Why, it was the subject of all our conversation. I plied him with it in bed so that he could not sleep, and I plied him with it at board so that he could not eat. Yea, I talked about it in private and glanced at it in public and I always kept telling him that it was vile and bad.

*Abb.*—(Turning suddenly round upon Adriana) Ay, and that is the reason why the man has been driven to madness. The spiteful clamour of a jealous woman is even more poisonous and deadly than a mad dog's tooth. You would not allow him to sleep with the vehemence of your abuse, and hence it is that he has become light-headed and mad. Al-

'Thou say'st his meat was sauced by thy upbraiding : • 75  
 Unquiet meals make ill digestions .  
 'Thereof the raging fire of fever bred :  
 And what's fever but a fit of madness ?  
 'Thou say'st his sports were hinder'd by thy brawls  
 Sweet recreation barr'd, what doth ensue 80  
 But moody, heavy and dull melancholy,  
 Kinsman to grim and comfortless despair .  
 And at her heels a huge infectious troop  
 Of pale distemperatures and foes to life ?  
 In food, in sport, and life-preserving rest 85  
 'To be disturb'd, would mad or man or beast .  
 'The consequence is, then, thy jealous fits  
 Have scared thy husband from the use of wits.

*Luc.* She never reprehended him but mildly,  
 When he demean'd himself rough, rude and wildly. 90  
 Why bear you these rebukes and answer not ?

you say that his meals were disturbed by your reproaches. Now, unquiet meals produce bad digestion, bad digestion causes fever, and what is madness but another form of fever? Also you say that even in his very sports he was interrupted by your reproaches. Now, when a man is shut out from sweet recreation, the result is that he becomes dull, depressed and melancholy—a disposition which is almost allied to bleak and desolate despair; and this despair brings in its train a swarm of other diseases which are fatal to life. Why, to be interrupted in food, in sleep, in sport—such a course would drive into madness either man or beast; and so it comes to this that it is thy jealousy which has robbed your husband of his senses

*Luc.*—(Coming to the defence of *her sister*) But she reproached him only when he was rude or boisterous—and even then, in the mildest manner possible! (Turning to *Adriana*) Why do you submit patiently to these rebukes and don't give any reply to them?

*Adr.* She did betray me to my own reproof.  
Good people, enter, and lay hold on him.

*Abb.* No : not a creature enters in my house.

*Adr.* Then let your servants bring my husband  
forth. 95

*Abb.* Neither : he took this place for sanctuary,  
And it shall privilege him from your hands  
Till I have brought him to his wits again,  
Or lose my labour in assaying it.

*Adr.* I will attend my husband, be his nurse,  
Diet his sickness, for it is my office,  
And will have no attorney but myself ;  
And therefore let me have him home with me. 100

*Abb.* Be patient , for I will not let him stir  
Till I have used the approved means I have, 105  
With wholesome syrups, drugs, and holy prayers,

*Adr.*—Why, she has entrapped me, she has drawn me on to say things  
damaging to myself. (*Turning to others*) Good people, enter this house  
and seize my husband.

*Abb.*—Nay, I won't allow a single creature to enter this house

*Adr.*—Then ask your own servants to bring out my husband.

*Abb.*—I won't do that either. He has entered this place claiming refuge,  
and certainly he will enjoy the privilege of sanctuary till I have restored  
him to his proper wits or have at least made an attempt to do so\*

*Adr.*—But, it is *my* duty as wife to attend upon my husband, to nurse  
him and feed him in his illness. It is *my* duty and I will do it ; and I shall  
not allow any body else to do it as my proxy. Therefore please allow me  
to take him home with me.

*Abb.*—Have patience ; for I won't allow him to be removed till by the  
use of well-tested means—such as drugs, soothing draughts and holy prayers

\* Either I shall succeed in restoring him to his former wits or I shall  
fail in the attempt ; but in neither case shall I give him up to you unless  
I have first made an attempt.

To make of him a formal man again.

It is a branch and parcel of mine oath,

A charitable duty of my order :

Therefore depart, and leave him here with me.

110

*Adr.* I will not hence and leave my husband here :

And ill it doth besecm your holiness

To separate the husband and the wife.

*Abb.* Be quiet, and depart ; thou shalt not have him.

[*Exit.*

*Luc.* Complain unto the duke of this indignity.

115

*Adr.* Come, go : I will fall prostrate at his feet,

And never rise until my tears and prayers

Have won his grace to come in person hither,

And take perforce my husband from the abbess.

*Sec. Mer.* By this, I think, the dial points at five :

120

Anon, I'm sure, the duke himself in person

I have restored him to his normal senses. To heal the sick is a part and parcel of my oath—one of the beneficent duties of my order. Therefore depart and leave him here with me.

*Adr.*—I will not go away and leave my husband here ; and certainly it does not become your holy character that you should be the means of separating husband from wife.

*Abb.* ...

*Luc.*—Complain to the duke of this high-handed insult.

*Adr.*—Let us go to the Duke, and I will fall down at his feet and never get up again till I have persuaded him with tears and prayers to come here in person and forcibly rescue my husband from the Abbess.

*Sec. Mer.*—Well, you need not leave this place to seek the Duke. The clock is on the stroke of five ; and I am sure that the Duke will soon be

Comes this way to the melancholy vale,  
The place of death and sorry execution,  
Behind the ditches of the abbey here.

*Ang.* Upon what cause ? 125

*Sec. Mer.* To see a reverend Syracusan merchant,  
Who put unluckily into this bay

Against the laws and statutes of this town,  
Behewed publicly for his offence

*Ang.* See, where they come — we will behold his death. 130

*Luc.* Kneel to the duke before he pass the abbey.

*Enter DUKE, attended ; ÆGEON bareheaded : with the Headsman and other Officers*

*Duke.* Yet once again proclaim it publicly,

coming here in person on his way to that melancholy vale behind the moat of the abbey which is the place of shameful death and execution.

*Ang.*—And what is the occasion that brings him here ?

*Sec. Mer.*—It is to see an old Syracusan merchant who unfortunately entered this harbour against the laws and decrees of the town and who is to be executed in public for his offence.

*Ang.* . . . .

*Luc.* . . . .

(The Duke enters attended by followers. With him is Ægeon bareheaded, the executioner and certain other people.)

*Duke.*—Have it proclaimed yet once again that this man will not die

If any friend will pay the sum for him,  
He shall not die, so much we tender him.

*Adr.* Justice, most sacred duke, against the  
abbess? 135

*Duke.* She is a virtuous and a reverend lady :  
It cannot be that she hath done thee wrong.

*Adr.* May it please your grace, Antipholus, my  
husband,—

Whom I made lord of me and all I had,  
At your important letters,—this ill day 140  
A most outrageous fit of madness took him .  
That desperately he hurried through the street—  
With him his bondman, all as mad as he,—  
Doing displeasure to the citizens  
By rushing in their houses, bearing thence 145  
Rings, jewels, any thing his rage did like.

It even now some one is ready to pay ransom for him. So much consideration we are still prepared to show him

*Adr.*—O sacred Duke, I pray for justice against the Abbess.

*Duke*—She is a virtuous and reverend lady, and it does not seem likely that she can have harmed you in any way

*Adr.*—May it please your Grace! My husband Antipholus—whom I married and invested with all my property in obedience to your urgent command—this Antipholus became possessed to-day with a violent fit of madness, so much so that accompanied by his bondman (who is also mad like himself) he rushed wildly through the streets—doing offence to the citizens, entering their houses, violently carrying away their rings, jewels\* and anything else that his mad fancy might dictate. Once I

\* Of course, the only ground for Adriana's sweeping general charge is the story she has got from the courtesan.

Once did I get him bound, and sent him home,  
 Whilst to take order for the wrongs I went,  
 That here and there his fury had committed.

Anon, I wot not by what strong escape, 150  
 He broke from those that had the guard of  
 him.,

And with his mad attendant and himself,  
 Each one with useful passion, with drawn swords  
 Met us again, and, madly bent on us

Chased us away, till, raising of more aid 155

We came again to bind them. When they fled  
 Into this abbey, whither we pursued them

And here the abbess shuts the gates on us  
 And will not suffer us to fetch him out,

Nor send him forth that we may bear him hence. 160

Therefore, most gracious duke, with thy com-  
 mand,

Let him be brought forth and borne hence for help.

succeeded in getting him bound and sending him home, while I proceeded to take measures about the injuries he had committed in his madness. But anon he broke loose from custody—I know not by what violent means;—and then he and his attendant, both with drawn swords and infuriated with mad passion, met us again in the street and drove us away before them in their fury. We also on our part called in the assistance of more people and proceeded with their help to secure them again. At this they fled and took refuge in this Abbey whither we have followed at their heel. But here the lady Abbess has shut the gates in our face and refuses either to send him forth herself or allow us to enter and bring him out. Therefore, gracious Duke, give order that he may be brought out and carried home in order that he may be treated.

*Duke.* Long since thy husband served me in my  
 wars .  
 And I to thee engaged a prince's word.  
 When thou didst make him master of thy bed,      • 165  
 To do him all the grace and good I could.  
 Go, some of you, knock at the abbey gate.  
 And bid the lady abbess come to me  
 I will determine this before I stir.

*Enter a Servant,*

*Serv.* O mistress, mistress ! shift and save yourself. 170  
 My master and his man are both broke loose,  
 Beaten the maids a-row and bound the doctor,  
 Whose beard they have singed off with brands of  
 fire ;  
 And ever, as it blazed, they threw on him  
 Great pails of puddled mire to quench the hair      175  
 My master preaches patience to him, the while

*Duke.*—Your husband has long served me as a soldier ; and when you  
 made him the lord of your possessions I pledged you my princely word  
 (I promised you on the honour of a prince) that I would show him as much  
 labour as I could. Go, some of you . . . I will settle this matter before  
 proceeding further.

{ A Servant enters }

*Servant*—[*Addressing Adriana*] O mistress, look out for yourself and  
 secure your safety. My master and his servant have both escaped from  
 custody ; they have beaten the maid-servants all in a row, have bound the  
 doctor and are engaged in burning his beard. And as often as the beard  
 catches fire they pour buckets of filthy water upon it in order to quench the  
 fire, as they say. All the time, the master keeps mocking him to his face  
 saying that he must have patience, while the man crops his hair with



His man with scissors nicks him like a fool ;  
 And sure, unless you send some present help,  
 Between them they will kill the conjurer.

*Adr.* Peace, fool ! thy master and his man are  
 here, 180

And that is false thou dost report to us.

*Serv.* Mistress, upon my life, I tell you true  
 I have not breathed almost since I did see it.  
 He cries for you and vows, if he can take you,  
 To scotch your face and to disfigure you. 185

[*Cry within.*

Hark, hark ! I hear him, mistress : fly, be gone !

*Duke.* Come, stand by me, fear nothing. Guard  
 with halberds !

*Adr.* Ay me, it is my husband ! Witness you,  
 That he is borne about invisible !

a pair of scissors and tricks him out like a fool. Surely, unless you can  
 send immediate help, they will kill the conjurer between them.

*Adr.*—Hush, thou fool ! What you say is false, for thy master and  
 servant are both here.

*Servant*—Mistress, I swear upon my life that what I say is the truth,  
 and in my haste to give you news I have not even paused to draw breath.  
 Also the master cries out for you and vows that if he can catch you he will  
 cut up your face and thus mar your beauty.

[A great shout in the distance.]

Ah, listen, there he is. Get away as quickly as you can.

*Duke*—Come, stand near me and you will have no occasion for fear.  
 Guards, draw near with your halberds.

*Adr.*—(Seeing her husband at a distance) Ah, surely, that is my  
 husband ! See, he must have been carried away invisibly from this

Even now we housed him in the abbey here ; 190  
And now he's there, past thought of human reason.

*Enter.* ANTIPHOLUS of Ephesus and DROMIO of Ephesus.

*Ant. E.* Justice, most gracious duke ! O, grant me justice,

Even for the service that long since I did thee,  
When I bestid thee in the wars, and took  
Deep scars to save thy life : even for the blood 195  
That then I lost for thee, now grant me justice.

*Ege.* Unless the fear of death doth make me dote,

I see my son Antipholus and Dromio !

*Ant. E.* Justice, sweet prince, against that woman there !

She whom thou gavest to me to be my wife, 200  
That hath abused and dishonour'd me  
Even in the strength and height of injury !

place ! Only now we found him taking shelter in this Abbey, and yet now we see him outside ! Surely, human reason can't conceive how this may have happened.

*Ant. E.*—Most gracious Duke, I pray for justice ! O grant me justice for the sake of the service that I rendered you a long time ago, when I saved your life by standing over your body and taking upon me the wounds that were meant for you. Yea, grant me justice even for the sake of the blood that I then lost in your cause.

*Leon.*—(Speaking aside) Unless I have been rendered quite foolish by the fear of impending death, surely, it is my son Antipholus that I see before me, and that is his servant Dromio.

*Ant. E.*—Sweet Prince, I demand justice against that woman there whom you gave to me for my wife. She has wronged and injured me even to the farthest limit of wrong and injury. Yea, the insult that she

Beyond imagination is the wrong  
That she this day hath shameless thrown on me.

*Duke.* Discover how, and thou shalt find me  
just.

205

*Ant. E.* This day, great duke, she shut the doors  
upon me,

While she with harlots feasted in my house.

*Duke.* A grievous fault. Say, woman, didst  
thou so?

*Adr.* No, my good lord : myself, he, and my  
sister

To-day did dine together. So befall my soul  
As this is false he burdens me withal !

210

*Luc.* Ne'er may I look on day, nor sleep on  
night,

But she tells to your highness simple truth !

has heaped shamelessly upon me to-day is beyond all possibility of  
conception.

*Duke.*—Show how you have been injured, and you will surely get justice  
at my hands.

*Ant. E.*—Great Duke, this very day she shut me out of my own  
house, while she was feasting within with a lot of base and lewd  
fellows.

*Duke.*—That surely would be a most grievous fault. Well, woman,  
what have you got to say to it ?

*Adr.*—No, my good Lord, it was not so. Rather he, myself and my  
sister dined together at the house. And may I fare in the next world  
according as his charge is true or false !\*

*Luc.*—My Lord, what she says is the bare truth ! Otherwise, may  
I never live to see day again or to sleep by night !

\* In other words, may I be saved if what I say is true and may I be  
damned if what I say is false !

*Ang.* O perjured woman ! they are both forsworn .  
In this the madman justly chargeth them. 215

*Ant. E.* My liege, I am advised what I say ,  
Neither disturbed with the effect of wine,  
Nor heady-rush, provoked with raging ire,  
Albeit my wrongs might make one wiser mad.  
This woman lock'd me out this day from dinner . 220  
That goldsmith there, were he not pack'd with her,  
Could witness it, for he was with me then ;  
Who parted with me to go fetch a chain,  
Promising to bring it to the Porpentine,  
Where Balthazar and I did dine together. 225  
(Our dinner done, and he not coming thither,  
I went to seek him : in the street I met him,  
And in his company that gentleman.

*Inclo —(Speaking aside)* O false and treacherous woman ! They are both swearing falsely, and in this respect at least (viz. so far as shutting out from the house is concerned) the madman's charge against them is true.

*Ant. E.*—My lord, I am speaking with due deliberation—not heated with wine, nor rashly impetuous, nor infuriated with rage, though what I have suffered would be enough to make even a wise man mad. This woman (to-day) shut me out from my house at dinner, and that goldsmith standing there could speak to the truth of my story if he had not entered into an unholy league with her. Afterwards the Goldsmith left me promising to bring a chain at the sign of the Porpentine where I and Balthazar were engaged to dine together. Dinner being finished and finding that the goldsmith had not turned up yet, I went out in search of him and found him in the street in company with that gentleman.

There did this perjured goldsmith swear me down,  
That I this day of him received the chain, 230  
Which, God he knows, I saw not, for the which  
He did arrest me with an officer.  
I did obey, and sent my peasant home  
For certain ducats : he with none return'd.  
Then fairly I bespoke the officer 235  
To go in person with me to my house.  
By the way we met  
My wife, her sister, and a rabble more  
Of vile confederates. Along with them.  
They brought one Pinch, a hungry lean-faced villain, 240  
A mere anatomy, a mountebank,  
A threadbare juggler, and a fortune-teller,  
A needy, hollo-eyed, sharp-looking wretch,  
A living-dead man : this pernicious slave,  
Forsooth, took on him as a conjurer, 245

(Pointing to the Second Merchant). There this treacherous goldsmith falsely swore that I had this day received a chain from him, when, God knows, no such chain was ever seen by me. And upon this false charge he had me arrested—I obeyed (like a peaceful citizen) and sent my servant home in order to bring money (with which to hail me out) The servant however brought me none. And then I entreated the officer and asked him to come with me to my house saying that I would surely be able to procure the money there. (He consented ; ) but while we were coming along, on the road we came across my wife, her sister and a lot more of their rascally fellow-conspirators. Also they had with them a man named Pinch—a hungry, lean-faced rogue, a mere skeleton, a quack, a broken-down fortune-teller and juggler ; a thin, needy, miserable-looking fellow, in fact, the living carcase of a man. Well, this most miserable rogue took upon himself to play the part of a conjurer. He started into

And, gazing in mine eyes, feeling my pulse,  
 And with no face, as 'twere, outfac'ing me,  
 Cries out, I was possess'd. Then, all together,  
 They fell upon me, bound me, bore me thence,  
 And in a dark and dankish vault at home 250  
 There left me and my man, both bound together ;  
 'Till, gnawing with my teeth my bonds in sunder,  
 I gain'd my freedom and immediately  
 Ran hither to your grace , whom I beseech  
 To give me ample satisfaction 255  
 For these deep shames and great indignities.

*Ang.* My lord, in truth, thus far I witness with him,  
 That he dined not at home, but was lock'd out.

*Duke.* But had he such a chain of thee, or no ?

my eyes, felt my pulse, and, seeking to face me out (abash me) with that lean no-face of his cried out that, I was possessed by a ghost. Then they fell upon me all in a body, bound me and carried me away, and cast me and my man both into a dark and damp vault at home. There, however, I gnawed asunder with my teeth the cord with which I was tied, and thus securing my freedom ran at once to take shelter with your Grace. And I again beseech you, my Lord, that you will give me satisfaction for the deep wrong and insult that has been inflicted upon me.

*Angelo*—My Lord, I can bear him out in one part of his story—  
 viz. that he did not dine at home and that in fact he was shut out from there

*Duke*—But did he receive from you such a chain as you speak of or not ?

\* The Duke's full meaning may be thus brought out : "You say that you can bear him out as regards one part of his story ; but what about the other part ? He denies having received any chain from you . what do you say to that ?"

*Ang.* He had, my lord : and when he run in here, 260  
these people saw the chain about his neck.

*Sec., Mer.* Besides, I will be sworn, these ears of mine  
Heard you confess you had the chain of him  
After you first forswore it on the mart :  
And, thereupon, I drew my sword on you ; 265  
And then you fled into this abbey here,  
From whence, I think, you are come by miracle.

*Ant. E.* I never came within these abbey-walls,  
Nor ever didst thou draw thy sword on me :  
I never saw the chain, so help me Heaven ! 270  
And this is false you burden me withal.

*Duke.* Why, what an intricate impeach is this !  
I think you all have drunk of Circe's cup.

*Angelo*—My Lord, as far as that is concerned, he had the chain from me.  
And when he ran for shelter to this house, the people here saw the chain  
about him

*Sec. Mer.*—Besides, I can swear that I heard with these very ears  
(here turns towards Ant. E.) that you first on the mart, denied having  
received the chain and afterwards acknowledged that you had received it  
from him. In fact, it was for this that I drew my sword against you  
and then you fled for shelter to this Abbey, whence it seems you must  
have escaped by some miracle \*

*Ant. E.*—(I deny all thy statements.) I never entered this Abbey ;  
you never drew your sword against me ; and I never saw this chain, so  
help me God ! And this charge that you bring against me is wholly  
false.

*Duke*—Why, what a tangled and most intricate affair have we got  
here ! I think you must all have been bewitched (you must all have

\* They had never seen him come out by the gate : and hence the  
miracle of his sudden appearance among them. (But of course it was  
Ant. S. who had fled for shelter to the Abbey while it was Ant. E. who  
was now standing among them on the street.)

If here you housed him, here he would have been . . .  
 If he were mad, he would not plead so coldly : 275  
 You say, he dined at home ; the goldsmith here  
 Denies that saying. Sirrah, what say you ?

*Dro. E.* Sir, he dined with her there at the Porpen-  
 tine.

*Cour.* He did , and from my finger snatch'd that  
 ring.

*Ant. E.* 'Tis true, my liege ; this ring I had of her. 280

*Duke.* Saw'st thou him enter at the abbey here ?

*Cour.* Ay sure, my liege, as I do see your Grace.

*Duke.* Why, this 's strange. Go call the abbess  
 hither.

I think you are all mated, or stark mad.

[*Exit one to the Abbess.*]

(*Drunk the poison of Circe's cup.*) (*Turning to the goldsmith and the*  
*Ser. Her.*) If you had seen him entering this Abbey he would still have  
 been there and could not possibly have come out. Also, if he were mad  
 he could not be pleading thus coolly and deliberately (*Turning to Adrian*)  
 Again you say that he dined at home, while the goldsmith here contradicts  
 your story. (*Turning to Dromio E.*) Well, you fellow, what have you got  
 to say to it ?

*Dro. E.*—Sir, my master dined with her there (pointing to the  
 Courtesan) at the sign of the Porpentine.

*Cour.*—Yes, he did so, and he snatched away that ring from my finger.

*Ant. E.*—That is true, my Lord ; I got this ring from her.

*Duke.*—(*Speaking to the Courtesan*) But did you also see him enter this  
 Abbey ?

*Cour.*—Yes, my Lord, that I did as clearly as I see your Grace here

*Duke.*—Why, this seems quite extraordinary ; I think, you must all be  
 mad or quite confounded. Go call the Abbess here.



*Æge.* Most mighty duke, vouchsafe me speak a word. 285

Haply I see a friend will save my life.  
And pay the sum that may deliver me.

*Duke.* Speak freely, Syracusian, what thou wilt.

*Æge.* Is not your name, sir, call'd Antipholus ?  
And is not that your bondman, Dromio ? 290

*Dro. E.* Within this hour I was his bondman, sir ;  
But he, I think him, gnaw'd in two my cords :  
Now am I Dromio and his man unbond.

*Æge.* I am sure both of you remember me.

*Dro. E.* Ourselves we do remember, sir, by you : 295  
For lately we were bound, as you are now.  
You are not Pinch's patient, are you, sir ?

*Ægeon*—Most mighty Duke, will you permit me to put in one word at this point ? It seems to me that I see a friend here who will pay my ransom and thus be able to save my life.

*Duke* .. ..

*Ægeon*—(*Turning to Ant. E.*) Sir, is not your name Antipholus and is not that your servant (bondsmen) Dromio ?

*Dro. E.*—Nay, sir, no doubt I was his *bondman* within this last hour (being bound in the same cord with him) ; but now (since he has gnawed asunder the cord) I am only his servant and not bondsman. \*

*Ægeon* .. ..

*Dro. E.*—Well sir, you remind us of what we lately were : for *you* are bound, and so were we. I hope, sir, that unlike us you are not a patient of Pinch

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\* Note the quibble in the word bondsman, meaning (1) slave, and (2) bound as with a cord.

*Ege.* Why look you strange on me ? you know me well.

*Ant. E.* I never saw you in my life till now.

*Ege.* O ' grief hath chang'd me since you saw me last,

300

And careful hours with time's deformed hand  
Have written strange defeatures in my face .  
But tell me yet, dost thou not know my voice ?

*Ant. E.* Neither.

*Ege.* Dromio, nor thou ?

305

*Dro. E.* No, trust me, sir, nor I.

*Ege.* I am sure thou dost

*Dro. E.* Ay, sir, but I am sure I do not . and  
whatsoever a man denies, you are now bound to  
believe him.

310

*Egeon*—Why do you look upon me as a stranger ? Surely, you must recognise me, both of you.

*Ant. E.*

*Egeon*—Ah ' grief, anxiety and the deforming hand of Time—these must have changed me greatly since you saw me last and produced strange alterations in my features. Yet don't you recognise me by my voice ?

*Ant. E.*—Not that either.

*Egeon* . . .

*Dro. E.* . . .

*Egeon* . . .

*Dro. E.*—You say that I must recognise you ; but I am quite sure that I don't. And whatever a man may assert or deny, you are now bound to accept his statement. \*

\* \* He is bound (obliged) to accept this statement being bound physically with ropes.

*Ege.* Not know my voice ! O, time's extremity,  
 Hast thou so crack'd and splitt'd my poor tongue  
 In seven short years, that here my only son  
 Knows not my feeble key of untuned cares ?  
 'Though now this grained face of mine be hid 315  
 In sap-consuming winter's drizzled snow,  
 And all the conduits of my blood froze up,  
 Yet hath my night of life some memory,  
 My wasting lamp some fading glimmer left,  
 My dull deaf ears a little use to hear : 320  
 All these old witnesses—I cannot err—  
 Tell me thou art my son Antipholus.

*Ant. E.* I never saw my father in my life.

*Ege.* But seven years since, in Syracuse, boy,  
 'Thou know'st we parted : but, perhaps, my son, 325  
 'Thou sham'st to acknowledge me in misery.

*Egeon*—You say that you can't recognise my voice ! 'Alas for the evil effects of time ! Has it so cracked and injured my tune that even my own son can't recognise my feeble and discordant voice after the lapse of seven short years ? But though the current of my blood seems to have frozen up with time, and though age has overlaid my furrowed face with her sap-consuming snow, yet some faint glimpse of memory still lingers in my heart ; my dim and faded eyes have still some power of sight, and my dull ears still retain some faculty of hearing. And all these feeble and lingering senses of mine assure me that you are my son Antipholus,

*Int. E.*—But I never saw my father in my life !

*Egeon*—Why, we parted from each other at Syracuse only seven years ago ! But perhaps, my son, you are ashamed to recognise me in my present wretched and humiliated condition.

*Ant. E.* The duke, and all that know me in the city.  
Can witness with me that it is not so :  
I ne'er saw syracusa in my life

*Duke.* I tell thee, Syracusan, twenty years 330  
Have I been patron to Antipholus,  
During which time he ne'er saw Syracuse.  
I see thy age and dangers make thee dote.

*Re-enter Abbess, with ANTIPHOLUS of Syracuse and  
DROMIO of Syracuse.*

*Abb.* Most mighty duke, behold a man much  
wrong'd. [*All gather to see them.*

*Adr.* I see two husbands, or mine eyes deceive me ? 335

*Duke.* One of these men is Genius to the other ;  
And so of these. Which is the natural man,  
And which the spirit ? who deciphers them ?

*Inf. E.*—The Duke himself and all my friends at Ephesus can  
witness that this is not the fact and that I was never at Syracuse all my life.

*Duke*—I tell you, Merchant of Syracuse, that Antipholus has been under  
my protection during the last twenty years and during all this time has  
never been to Syracuse. I see that you have been quite demented by age  
and the fear of death.

[ The Abbess re-enters accompanied by Ant. S. and Dro. S. ]

*Abb.*—Most mighty Duke, behold, here is a man to whom great wrong  
has been done.

*Adr.*—Do my eyes deceive me ? Or do I actually see two husbands ?

*Duke*—One of these men (pointing to the two Antipholuses) must be  
the very spirit of the other ; and so it is with this second pair (pointing to  
the two Dromios). Now, which is the real man and which is the ghost ?  
Who will be able to solve the mystery ?

*Dro. S.* I, sir, am Dromio : command him away.

*Dro. E.* I, sir, am Dromio : pray, let me stay. 340

*Ant. S.* Ægeon art thou not ? or else his ghost ?

*Dro. S.* O, my old master ! who hath bound him here ?

*Abb.* Whoever bound him, I will loose his bonds,  
And gain a husband by his liberty.

Speak, old Ægeon, if thou be'st the man 345

'That hadst a wife once call'd Æmilia

'That bore thee a burden two fair sons :

O, if thou be'st the same Ægeon, speak,

And speak unto the same Æmilia !

*Æge.* If I dream not, thou art Æmilia . 350

If thou art she, tell me where is that son

'That floated with thee on the fatal raft ?

*Dro.—I, sir, am the real Dromio. Ask that other creature to get away.*

*Dro. E.—No sir, it is I who am the real Dromio ; pray, let me stay*

*Ant. S.—Are you my father Ægeon ? Or are you his ghost ?*

*Dro. S.—O my old master, who is it that has laid you under chains ?*

*Abb.—Whoever may have bound him I shall procure his liberty ; and in securing his liberty I shall secure a husband for myself. Answer, Ægeon . say, aren't you the man who once had a wife named Æmilia—which Æmilia—bore two fair twin sons to you ? If you are the same Ægeon, speak ; and in speaking to me you will be speaking to your own Æmilia.*

*Ægeon—Unless I am dreaming, you surely must be Æmilia. And if you are Æmilia then tell me what has happened to the child that was bound on the mast with you.*

*Abb.* By men of Epidamnum he and I  
 And the twin Dromio all were taken up,  
 But by and by rude fishermen of Corinth 355  
 By force took Dromio and my son from them,  
 And me they left with those of Epidamnum.  
 What then became of them, I cannot tell,  
 I to this fortune that you see me in.

*Duke.* Why, here begins his morning story right : 360  
 'These two Antipholuses, these two so like,  
 And these two Dromios, one in semblance,—  
 Besides her urging of her wrack at sea,—  
 'These are the parents to these children,  
 Which accidentally are met together. 365  
 Antipholus, thou camest from Corinth first ?

*Ant. S.* No, sir, not I, came from Syracuse.

*Duke.* Stay, stand apart ; I know not which is which.

*Abb.*—He, I, and one of the Dromio twins—we were all rescued by men of Epidamnum. But shortly afterwards certain rude fisher-folk from Corinth forcibly parted me from my son and Dromio ; and I do not know what has subsequently happened to them. As for myself, you see that fortune has raised me to the present position I occupy.

*Duke*—Why, this exactly squares with the story which the merchant told us in the morning. These two so exactly alike are the two Antipholuses, and these (similarly alike in figure) are the two Dromios. Also she tells the selfsame story about a wreck at sea. These two persons then (meaning Ægeon and the Abbess) are the parents of these two children, and a strange fate has now brought them all together. (Turning to *Ant. S.*) Antipholus, it was you who came to us from Corinth !

*Ant. S.*—No, Sir. . .

*Duke*—Stop, draw further apart or I shall be getting confused as to which is which.

*Ant. E.* I came from Corinth, my most gracious lord.—

*Dro. E.* And I with him. 370

*Ant. E.* Brought to this town by that most famous warrior,

Duke Menaphon, your most renowned uncle.

*Adr.* Which of you two did dine with me to-day?

*Ant. S.* I, gentle mistress.

*Adr.* And are not you my husband? 375

*Ant. E.* No; I say nay to that.

*Ant. S.* And so do I; yet did she call me so:

And this fair gentlewoman, her sister here,  
Did call me brother. • [*To Luc.*] What I told you then,

I hope I shall have leisure to make good, 380

If this be not a dream I see and hear.

*Ang.* That is the chain, sir, which you had of me.

*Ant. S.* I think it be, sir: I deny it not.

*Ant. E.*—My gracious master, it was I that came from Corinth.

*Dro. E.*

*Ant. E.*—And we were brought hither by that famous warrior, Duke Menaphon, who was your uncle.

*Adr.* ..

*Ant.* ..

*Adr.* ..

*Ant. E.*—Nay, I deny that fact utterly.

*Ant. S.*—So do I. And yet she persisted in calling me her husband, and this other fair gentlewoman persisted in calling me her brother. (Turning to Luciana) Unless all this be a dream, I shall have occasion at a future time to make good the protestations of love which I made to you a little while before.

*Angelo.*—(Speaking to Ant. S.) That, sir, is the chain of gold which you got from me.

*Ant. S.*—Yes, sir, so I think and I never denied the fact.

*Ant. E.* And you, sir, for this chain' arrested me.

*Ang.* I think I did, sir : I deny it not. 385

*Adr.* I sent you money, sir, to be your bail,  
By Dromio ; but I think, he brought it not.

*Dro. E.* No, none by me.

*Ant. S.* This purse of ducats I received from you,  
And Dromio, my man, did bring them me. 390  
I see, we still did meet each other's man ;  
And I was ta'en for him, and he for me,  
And thereupon these ERRORS are arose.

*Ant. E.* These ducats pawn I for my father here.

*Duke.* It shall not need ; they father hath his life 395

*Cour.* Sir, I must have that diamond from you.

*Ant. E.* There, take it ; and much thanks for my  
good cheer.

*Ant. E.*—(Speaking to Angelo) And it was for this chain that you  
arrested me

*Angelo*—(Speaking to Ant. E.) I am afraid that I did so sir, I can't  
deny it.

*Adr.*—(Speaking to Ant. E.) I sent some money through Dromio in order  
to bail you out from custody, but I think he never brought it to you

*Dro. E.*—No, you sent no money through me.

*Ant. S.*—(Speaking to Adriana) Ah, but I got a purse of ducats from  
you ; and it was my servant that brought it to me I now see that we  
two brothers were each meeting the servant of the other and I was mistaken  
for him while he was mistaken for me ; and it was from this confusion of  
identity that all these errors arose.

*Ant. E.*—I offer these ducats as ransom for my father's life.

*Duke*—But that sacrifice won't be necessary ; I have already granted  
pardon to your father.

*Cour.*—Sir, you must return that diamond ring to me.

*Ant. E.*—Why, take it now ; and with it take my thanks for your kind  
entertainment.



*Abb.* Renowned duke, vouchsafe to take the pains  
 To go with us into the abbey here,  
 And hear at large discoursed all our fortunes : 400  
 And all that are assembled in this place,  
 That by this sympathized one day's error  
 Have suffer'd wrong, go keep us company.  
 And we shall make full satisfaction.  
 Thirty-three years have I but gone in travail 405  
 Of you, my sons ; and till this present hour  
 My heavy burthen ne'er delivered.  
 The duke, my husband, and my children both,  
 And you the calendars of their nativity,  
 Go to a gossips' feast, and joy with me 410  
 After so long grief such festivity !

*Duke.* With all my heart, I'll gossip at this feast.

[*Exeunt all but Ant. S., Ant. E., Dro. S., and Dro. E.*]

*Dro. S.* Master, shall I fetch your stuff from  
 shipboard ?

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*Abb.*—Renowned Duke, be pleased to take trouble of entering this Abbey so that you may hear at length the story of our misfortunes. And you who are assembled in this place and who must have suffered by being party to our errors—you also will be pleased to accompany us, and we shall try to satisfy for your trouble.—For, thirty-three years, my sons I have gone about with a heavy load of grief for you ; and it is only now that I have been relieved of this weary burden. Well, you my Lord Duke you my husband, you my children, and you two who are like the calendars of their birth—come, let us all go to a christening feast as it were and share in my joy after such a long period of grief and suffering.

*Duke.*—For my part, I shall share right heartily in this merriment.

(Everybody departs excepting the two Dromios and the two Antipholuses.)

*Dro. S.*—(Speaking to Ant. E. and mistaking him for his master)  
 Master, shall I go on board the ship to bring back your luggage ?

*Ant. E.* Dromio, what stuff of mine hast thou  
embark'd

*Dro. S.* Your goods that lay at host, sir, in  
the Centaur. 415

*Ant. S.* He speaks to me. I am you: master, Dromio  
Come, go with us ; we'll look to that anon.  
Embrace thy brother there ; rejoice with him.

[*Exeunt. Ant. S. and Ant. E*

*Dro. S.* I here is a fat friend at your master's house,  
That kitchen'd me for you to-day at dinner . 420  
She now shall be my sister, not my wife

*Dro. E.* Methinks you are my glass, and not my brother .  
I see by you I am a seweet-faced youth.  
Will you walk in to see their gossiping ?

*Ant. E.*—(Replying to *Dro. S* but mistaking him for his own servant)  
Dromio, what luggage of mine have you put on board the ship ?

*Dro. S.*—(Still addressing *Ant. E.* ) Why sir, your goods which were  
lying in the inn at the sign of the Centaur

*Ant. S.*—(Speaking to his brother.) He means his remark for me  
Dromio, it is I who am your master. Come, let us go within and we shall  
see about the luggage afterward. Embrace thy brother there and rejoice  
with him (The two *Antipholyses* depart.)

*Dro. S.*—There is a fat friend in your master's house who took me for  
you, and entertained me very well at dinner today. I am glad that she is  
going to be my sister and not my wife.

*Dro. E.*—You are such an exact counterpart of mine that you are like  
my mirror and not like my brother ; and to judge from your appearance  
I should guess that I was a handsome man myself. Won't you go in  
present at their merry-making ?

*Dro. S.* Not I, sir ; you are my elder. 425

*Dro. E.* That's a question ; how shall we try it ?

*Dro. S.* We'll draw cuts for the senior : till then lead  
thou first.

*Dro. E.* Nay, then, thus :

We came into the world like brother and brother ;

And now let's go hand in hand, not one before another. 430

[*Exeunt.*]

*Dro. S.*—O no, sir, not before you, you are my elder.

*Dro. E.*—There may be some doubt about that. How are we to decide  
the point ?

*Dro. S.*—Well, we shall draw lots to find out as to who is the senior ;  
but till that is done it is you who must go first.

*Dro. E.*—Well, then, not first or last but together like this. (They join  
hands and walk side by side.) We came together to this world like  
brother and brother, and so now we must walk hand in hand not one before  
the other.

## NOTES.

### ACT I.

#### SCENE I.

[ This first scene supplies us with the framework of the story and serves two-fold purpose.

1. In the first place, by giving us an account of the two pairs of twins and of the wonderful similarity in appearance between each of these pairs, it makes the subsequent errors seem possible.
2. Then, again, the story of Aegeon's manifold misfortunes furnishes a pathetic background for the drama and heightens by contrast, the effect of the comic scenes.]
1. *To procure my fall*—to bring about my ruin ; here, to bring about my death.
2. *By the doom of death*—i.e. by passing sentence of death.
2. *End woes and all*—end this miserable existence of mine ; end my misery and with that end everything.
4. *Not partial*—not fond of.
4. *I am not partial...laws*—I do not wish to violate the laws of my country.
6. *The rancorous outrage of your duke*—the vengeful malice of your duke.
7. *Our well-dealing countrymen*—our countrymen engaged in the lawful pursuit of commerce.
8. *Guilders*—(1) a gold coin formerly current in parts of Germany ; (2) a Dutch silver coin worth about 1s 8d. Here used in the sense of money generally.
- 8. *Wanting guilders...lives*—not having sufficient means with which to ransom their lives.

9. *Have sealed...blood*—have satisfied the requirements of your vengeful laws by shedding their blood; have ratified your statutes as it were by shedding their blood. (The reference is to the practice which required that documents of legal import should be both signed and sealed.)

10. *'Excludes all pity*—banishes all feeling of pity and kindness.

11. *Intestine*—usually meaning, internal, internecine, as between people of the same state or country. But here evidently the meaning is different. Perhaps it is simply used as an intensive—to emphasise the idea conveyed in the word 'mortal': or perhaps it has been loosely used to indicate the state of war prevailing between the Syracusans and the people of Ephesus.

11. *Mortal and intestine jars*—fatal and deadly quarrels.

12. *Seditious countrymen*—treacherous, evil-minded countrymen. There is no reference to the modern sense of sedition which would mean hostility against the ruling power of one's own state.

13. *Solemn synods*—formal assemblies and councils.

15. *Adverse*—inimical; mutually opposed.

18. *Syracusan marts and fairs*—the markets and commercial centres of Syracuse.

20. *He dies*—suffers the penalty of death.

21. *Confiscate to the Duke's dispose*—forfeited and placed at the Duke's disposal.

22. *Mark*—an old English coin of the value of 13s 4d.

22. *Levied*—raised, collected.

23. *To quit the penalty*—to discharge the penalty, viz. the penalty of death legally inflicted upon him.

22. *To quit.....ransom him*—to satisfy the penalty and save his life. ('To ransom' properly means 'to save a man's life by the payment of a fine.')

24. *Thy substance*—the property you possess.

24. *Valued.....rate*—taken at its highest value.

25. *This my comfort*—I can take this comfort to my soul amidst of my troubles.

26. *As dreams*—have been fulfilled, have been carried out.

29. *My woes end.....sun*—**Expl.** If my life ends with the evening sun, my woes also will end at the same time; and that is my only consolation.

33. *Heavier*—sadder, more grievous.

34. *Than.....unspeakable*—than for me to recite the story of my unspeakable sorrow.

35. *My end*—viz. this present death.

36. *Was wrought by nature*—was brought about by the operation of natural affection.

36. *Not by vile offence*—not by any base desire to offend against the laws of your country.

36. *By nature*—by the natural affections of the heart; referring to the fact that he had visited Ephesus not for the sake of gain, nor from wilful desire to violate the laws of the country, but simply in quest of his lost son.

37. *Gives me leave*—enables me to utter.

35-37. *Yet that the world.....leave*—**Expl.** I will tell my story in order that the world may find that, if I came to Ephesus and thus incurred the penalty of death, it was not from any desire to give offence but simply from a natural desire to find out my long-lost son.

39. *Happy but for me*—who would have been happy if she had not been married to me.

40. *By me too*—Here the merchant slightly qualifies his former statement. 'She would have been made happy by me also if I had not been unlucky.'

42. *Prosperous*—here meaning, successful.

43. *Epidamnus*—a city on the eastern shore of the Adriatic, corresponding to the modern Durazzo. (Of course, the Greek name would be Epidamnus, and Epidamnus is only an accusative form of the word. But the name occurs in this form in W. W.'s translation of the *Mænechmi*, and this is another argument in support of the theory that Shakespeare consulted this translation and not the original.)

43. *Factor*—agent; one who does business on behalf of another.

44. *At random left*—left scattered and confused in different places.

44. *The great care....*~~left~~—the necessity of taking care of the goods which had been thus left.

45. *Drew me from.....*~~spouse~~—induced me to part from the company of my wife.

45. *Drew me from.....*~~i.e.~~ led me away from.

46. *From whom.....*~~following me~~—In other words, I had not been absent from her for six months before she too had made arrangements for following me.

46. *From whom.....*~~old~~—from whom I had not been parted for more than six months.

47. *Almost at fainting*—almost on the point of fainting.

47-8. *Under the pleasing....*~~bear~~—i.e. under the burden of pregnancy.

48. *Pleasing punishment*—welcome as being in the prospect of obtaining children.

54. *As could not be distinguished*—that they could not be separately recognized ~~one~~ from the other except by their names

55. *That very hour*—viz. the self same hour when my wife gave birth to a pair of twins.

56. *A meaner woman*—a woman of meaner rank. ('Master' is invariably used by Shakespeare in the sense of lower rank and not in the sense of worse character or disposition.

57. *Such a burden*—i.e., a similar pair of twins.

57. *Both alike*—i.e., both exactly resembling one another in form and feature.

59. *To attend my sons*—to wait upon my sons as their servants.

60. *Not meanly proud.....*~~boys~~—i.e., quite deservedly proud of her two lovely children.

61. *Made daily motions*—pressed me everyday.

61. *Motions*—suggestions, proposals.

62-3. *Too soon.....*~~aboard~~—too soon, because our taking ship was disastrous; it soon led to the destruction of the whole family.

62-3. *Unwilling.....*~~aboard~~—N. B. These words appear as one line in the Folio, thus giving a verse of fourteen syllables. But in most modern editions they are printed as

forming two lines, and it is conjectured that some words have dropped out after 'aboard.' Mr. Cunningham proposes to restore the reading thus:

"We came aboard; and put to sea but scarce."

65. *The always wind-obeying deep*—the sea which is always responsive to every impulse of the wind; the sea which is always agitated in sympathy with the motions of the wind.

66. *Instance*—proof, indication.

66. *Tragic instance*—'Tragic' is an instance of transferred epithet and properly should agree with 'harm.' It is not the 'instance' which was tragic but the 'harm' (misadventure) which was to befall us.

66. *Gave any.....harm*—gave any indication of the tragic disaster which was soon to befall us.

67. *But longer.....hope*—but we were no longer permitted to retain much hope, viz., as regards our safety. (In other words, the disaster came both swiftly and suddenly: it came soon, and when it came it was overwhelming in its character.)

68. *Obscured light*—faint, uncertain light, viz., from the sky being overcast with clouds.

68-70. *What obscured light.....death*—**Expl.** The sky being overcast with clouds shed but a dim and dubious light upon the scene; and yet this uncertain light was sufficient to assure us that we were in imminent danger of death.

70. *Doubtful warrant*—fearful certainty of immediate death. [*Doubtful* has been explained as meaning—(1) awful, dreadful; and (2) almost certain. Perhaps the word has been loosely and incorrectly used; but in any case, the meaning is perfectly plain.]

71. *Which*—viz. the prospect of immediate death.

71. *Though myself.....embraced*—though, speaking for myself, I would have gladly embraced and welcomed this fate.

73. *Weeping before*—i.e., weeping in anticipation of what was coming.

73. *For what she.....came*—for the death which she found was inevitable.

74. *Pitious pining*—pathetic wallings.

75. *Mourn'd for fashion*—wept in company because they found that their mother was weeping.



75. *That mourn'd.....fear*—The children knew not any cause of fear ; but they wept because they found that their mother was weeping.

72-6. *The incessant weepings.....and me*—**Expl.** My wife wept in anticipation of immediate death ; and the children wept, not knowing what to fear but because they found their mother weeping ; and it was this incessant crying of my wife and children which prompted me to seek respite for their lives.

76. *To seek delays.....me*—i.e. to seek respite from immediate death.

77. *This it was*—meaning that this was the arrangement made.

78. *The sailors.....safety'etc.*—**N.B.** The idea is this :—The sailors had run away with the life-boat of the ship ; the ship also was on the point of sinking ; and under such circumstances, our only hope of rescue was in lashing ourselves to a spare mast which served the purpose of a raft.

79. *Sinking-ripe*—i.e., ripe for sinking ; almost on the point of sinking.

80. *More careful.....born*—caring more for the safety of the younger twin.

80. *Latter born*—**N.B.** But this is in contrast with what is said in l. 126. Here we are told that the mother cared after the latter-born, while in l. 126 we find that it was the father who rescued the younger twin. Evidently, there is some confusion somewhere ; but in the rest of the book the poet proceeds upon the assumption that it was the eldest (and not the latter-born) who was cared for by the mother, while it was the youngest who fell to the custody of the father and was saved together with him.

81. *Had fastened him etc.*—The arrangement made for the safety of the family was something like this. The mother, the elder Antipholus and the elder Dromio were bound at one extremity of the mast, while the father, the younger Antipholus and the younger Dromio were fastened at the other extremity. They were almost on the point of being rescued by a ship, when the mast was violently dashed against a rock and split in two and thus separated the two halves of the family from one another.

81. *A small spare mast*—such as is kept ready for use if the original mast should be broken in a storm.

82. *Provide for storms*—keep ready to provide against the contingency of storms.

83. *The other twins*—viz. the servant twins.

84. *Had been like heedful*—took similar care.

86. *Fixing our eyes.....fixed*—both fixing our eyes upon the child that had been specially entrusted to our respective care.

86. *On whom.....fixed*—on whom, viz. upon the child who had been entrusted to the respective care of each of us.

88. *Obedient to the stream*—following the current of the sea.

89. *Was carried towards Corinth*—drifted southwards in the direction of Corinth.

91. *Those vapours*—here, referring not to mist but to cloud.

91. *Offended us*—harmed, injured us, viz. by obscuring our sight.

92. *By the benefit of his wished light*—under the influence of the genial sunshine. (*Wished*—wished for.)

93. *The seas.....calm*—the ruffled sea became quiet

94. *Making amain to us*—proceeding swiftly in our direction.

95. *Of Corinth that etc.*—one ship belonging to Epidaurus and another to Corinth. [Corinth had two ports—*Lachæum* on the Gulf of Corinth and *Cenchræ* on the Saronic gulf; and as Epidaurus also stood at the mouth of the Saronic Gulf, it has been reasonably conjectured that the ship from Corinth was proceeding from the port of Cenchræ. Now, as Cenchræ and Epidaurus both stand on the shore of the Aegean Sea, while Epidaurum is on the coast of the Adriatic, the account given by Aegeon would require either that the mast had drifted quite round the southern coast of Greece (an improbable supposition) or that the Greek ships were as a matter of fact making for the port of Durrazo and came upon the mast on their way thither.]

96. *Ere they came*—ere they succeeded in reaching our mast and picking us up.

97. *The sequel*—the end of the story.

97. *Gather the sequel.....before*—In other words, the end was as unfortunate as the beginning had been. (You can judge of the end of the story from the character of its beginning.)

98. *Forward*—go on with the story.

98. *Break off so*—i.e. break off in the middle.

99. *We may pity.....pardon thee*—Our hearts are full of pity for you though the law forbids us to pardon your offence. (We may not pardon you, for the law forbids us to do that; but our hearts are overflowing with sympathy for you.)

100. *Had the gods done so*—Take it in close connection with the last line.—The duke says—'we pity you for your misfortune'; and Aegeon promptly replies—'If the gods had been equally pitiful, I should have had no occasion to-day to blame them for their cruelty.'

100-01. *Had the gods.....to us*—**Expl.** If the gods had been as pitiful as you say that you are, then there would have been no reason for me to blame them for their cruelty to-day.

101. *Worthily*—justly, deservedly, with cause.

102. *Ere the ships.....leagues*—when the ships were still at a distance of ten leagues from us.

105. *Our helpful ship*—meaning the mast which had served them like a ship.

104-05. *Which being.....midst*—and the mast being violently dashed against this rock split and broke up in two halves.

106. *In this unjust divorce of us*—by thus harshly dividing one half of the family from the other.

106-08. *In this unjust divorce.....sorrow for*—**Expl.** For-  
tune, while thus harshly dividing me from my wife, left both of us in the same condition—i.e. left each of us with one object for whom to mourn and one in whom to take delight.

108. *What to delight in*—viz. the one child that was spared to each of us.

108. *What to sorrow for*—viz. the one child that was lost to each of us.

109. *Her part*—viz the half of the mast to which my wife and one of the twins were fastened.

109-10. *Seeming as burdened.....weight*—**Expl.** The burden of my wife's misery was as great as mine; but her physical weight was less, and therefore, her part of the mast, as lurdened with lesser weight, was carried more swiftly before the current of the sea.

110. *Not with lesser woe*—because the burden of her grief was as heavy as his own.

115. *Knowing...save*—i.e. happening to recognise me.

116. *Gave healthful welcome*—welcomed us heartily. (Perhaps 'healthful' his reference also to the fact that they were the means of saving his life.)

116. *Shipwrecked*—same word as "ship-wrecked"

117. *Rest*—deprived.

117. *The fishers*—viz. the fishermen of Corinth referred to in l. 113.

*Would have rest.....prey*—would have rescued my wife also from the vessel in which she had been taken up.

118. *Their bark*—viz the ship in which I was rescued.

119. *Therefore homeward*—Being slow of speed, they give up the idea of pursuing the Corinthian ship and turned instead in the direction of home.

120. *Have you heard.....bliss*—you have heard how I was deprived of happiness.

121-122. *By misfortunes.....mishaps*—**Expl.** It was sheer misfortune that has lengthened out my life in order that I may have the sad fate of personally reciting the story of my heavy ill luck. (Long life may be a blessing; but to me it a curse seeing that I have been reserved for the unhappy fate of reciting the story of my sad misfortunes.)

123. *Them thou sorrowest for*—viz. your lost wife and child.

124. *Dilate at full*—narrate with every detail.

124-25. *To dilate at full.....till now*—to give the full story of your subsequent happenings.

126. *Youngest boy*—See notes on l. 80.

126. *My eldest care*—'eldest' because first and only object of care. (The son left to me was the youngest boy ; but he was my eldest because first object of care.)

127-28. *Became inquisitive.....brother*—became anxious to ascertain the fate of his brother.

128. *Importuned*—entreated, besought.

129. *His attendant*—viz. the younger of the servant twins who was specially attached to him.

129. *So his cause was like*—because the servant was in a similar plight with himself. (The servant had lost his brother just as my son had lost his.)

132-33. *Whom whilst.....I loved*—N. B. The meaning is plain though the construction has been rendered obscure by the two 'whoms.' 'In my anxious desire to see the child I had lost, I hazarded the loss of the child whom I possessed and loved.'

132. *Of a love*—i.e. from natural affection of the heart.

132. *Whom whilst...to see*—whom, from natural affection, I was anxious to see, viz. the child that I had lost.

133. *The lost.....I loved*—i.e. the loss of the child whom I loved and possessed.

133. *Hazarded...loved*—I incurred the risk of losing the child whom I possessed, viz., by sending him out in search of his long-lost brother.

134. *Furthest Greece*—Magna Græcia ; referring to the wide territory over which the Greek people had settled in course of time and which, besides the mainland of Greece, included the isles of the Aegean sea, the sea board of Asia Minor, the southern portion of Italy and the island of Sicily.

134. *Five summers.....Greece*—In speaking of furthest Greece here Ægeon seems to be thinking of the Greek settlements on the coast of Asia Minor.

136. *Coasting homeward*—voyaging along the coast of Asia-Minor on my way back to Syracuse.

135. *Roaming.....Asia*—ranging all over Asia Minor from end to end.

137—38. *Hopeless to find.....harbours' men*—I had lost all hope of seeing my children, and yet was unwilling to leave

unsought one single place where men might dwell. (The idea is this: I had hardly any hope of finding my children in coming to Ephesus: yet I was unwilling to leave one single place unsought).

140. *Happy were.....death*—I should be quite glad to meet death.

141. *Could all.....live*—if I had the least assurance that my children were alive.

142. *Have mark'd*—seem to have singled out.

143. *To bear.....misshap*—in order to inflict upon him the extremest degree of misfortune.

145. *Against my crown.....dignity*—All these phrases together simply mean—'against my position as the prince of this country and the protector of its laws.'

145. *My crown*—my position as king.

145. *My oath*—the oath I took at the time of my coronation, viz. to protect the laws and customs of the country.

146. *Would they*—even if they wish.

146. *May not disannul*—may not cancel; may not disavow. (The idea is—Princes may not go against the laws of their country, even when they wish to do so; and it is for this that I am unable to plead for your life.)

147. *My soul.....for thee*—Personally I should be greatly inclined to plead for your life.

147. *As advocate for thee*—as advocate on behalf of your safety.

148. *Adjudged.....death*—sentenced to suffer the penalty of death.

150. *But to our.....disparagement*—except to the discredit of our position.

149-50. *Passed sentence.....disparagement*—To cancel a sentence that has been already inflicted would throw discredit upon our dignity.

151. *Favour thee...I can*—shall show you as much favour as is possible.

152. *I will limit.....day*—I will grant you one day's respite.

154. *Try all thy friends etc.*—i.e. for the money that is required in order to ransom your life.

153. *To seek thy life etc.*—**N.B.** The line is certainly corrupt; but the present version seems to be the best available though it involves a violent change of reading from the first folio. In the folio, the reading is, 'to seek thy *help* by beneficial help', which is practically meaningless. Some editors have changed the first *help* into *pest*, which though yielding a fair meaning, does not seem quite suitable.

155. *If no*—if you do not succeed in getting this amount.

159. *Hopeless and helpless*—I am hopeless and helpless of receiving any help.

160. *But to procrastinate etc.*—And the only result of this respite will be to lengthen out my life by a few miserable hours.

## SCENE 2.

[Here we have the beginning of the errors. Antipholus S—while promanaging the marr—is mistaken for Antipholus E. by the servant of the latter.]

**N.B.** It will be remembered that in the Folio the play is divided into acts but not into scenes; and the division into scenes, and the naming thereof, was the work of subsequent editors.

1. *Therefore*—Evidently the merchant has been telling Antipholus about the strict laws of the city against the landing of Syracusans.

*Therefore*—i.e. if you want to save your life and escape the rigour of the law.

*Give out*—let it be known.

2. *Iest that...confiscate*—for otherwise your goods will be forfeited.

4. *Is apprehended*—i.e. has been arrested.

5. *To buy out his life*—to save his life by the payment of ransom.

7. *The weary sun*—Another instance of transferred epithet; it is not the sun that is weary but the unhappy prisoner, who will have to lose his life at set of sun.

8. *That I had to keep*—which you kept in deposit with me.

9. *Where we host*—where we are putting up.
11. *Within this hour etc.*—referring to the Elizabethan practice of dining at midday.
12. *View the manners of the town*—walk about observing the manners of the people.
13. *Peruse the traders*—i.e. observe their customs and manners.
15. *Stiff*—sore, tired.
17. *Would take you at your word*—i.e., would take the last remark literally and get away for good. (Dromio's full meaning can be thus brought out : "You entrust me with a large sum of money and ask me to get away. Well, many servants in my position would take your words literally and get away for good and all.")
18. *Having so good a mean*—i.e., having such a goodly sum at his disposal. ('Mean' is the same as 'means'.)
19. *A trusty villain*—referring to the servant who is now making off in the direction of the inn.
20. *Dull with care and melancholy*—oppressed and dispirited with care.
21. *Lightens my humour*—cheers up and comforts my spirit.
24. *Invited...merchants*—i.e. invited by certain merchants to meet them.
25. *Of whom.....benefit*—and I hope to make some money out of these people.
26. *Crave your pardon*—beg that you will excuse me for not complying with your request.
27. *Upon the mart*—As has been pointed out in the Introduction, this frequent mention of 'Mart' in the play was perhaps suggested by Sir Thomas Gresham's Royal Exchange which had been opened in 1571.  
(*'Mart'* would mean the resort of the common meeting place of merchants.)
28. *Consort you*—i.e., keep company with you.
29. *Calls me from you*—takes me away from you.
30. *I will go lose myself*—i.e. mix myself up among the crowds of the street.



32. *I commend you.....content*—an ordinary expression of courteous greeting. Lit. it would mean - 'I commend you to the happy company of your own thoughts.' And it is to this literal meaning of the expression that Antipholus refers in his subsequent speech.

33-34. *He that commends...I cannot get*—**Expl.** This man commends me to the company of my own happy thoughts. But, as a matter of fact, my thoughts are far from being happy and therefore he commends me to the possession of something which I have not got.

35. *To the world*—i.e. in my attitude and relation to the world.

35. *I am like a drop of water*—Of course, the simile is intended to mark the hopelessness of the quest. Just as it is impossible for one drop of water to find out another drop in the vast and heaving bosom of the sea, so in the vast, crowded sea of the world it is apparently impossible for Antipholus to find out his brother.

37-38. *Falling.....himself*—**Expl.** The drop, unable to find its fellow drop, loses itself in the vast fields of the ocean, with its enquiry still unsatisfied ; and so it is with myself. I have failed to find out my brother ; my quest is still unsatisfied and in the meantime I lose myself in the thronged and crowded streets of this city.

41. *My true date*—the very date and year of my birth.

41. *The almanack of my true date*—i.e. who is an exact remembrancer of my age. (He means that Dromio, having been born in the same year with himself, serves to remind him of his birth even as an almanack may do.)

41. *Here comes the almanack etc.*—**N. B.** Students will notice that the series of errors first begins here—from Dromio of Ephesus mistaking the younger Antipholus for his master, while Ant. S. also falls into the parallel mistake of taking Dro. E. for his own servant.

42. *Returned so soon*—viz. from the inn where Ant. S. had sent his servant.

42. *Returned so soon*—Of course, Dro. E. does not understand the expression, for he has returned from nowhere. He is coming straight from his mistress's house in order to invite the master to dinner.

44. *The capon burns etc.*—In other words, the dinner is overdone and is on the point of being spoilt.

44. *Capon*—a cock fattened for eating.

44. *Falls from the spit*—i.e. is ready to drop off from the spit where it is being turned over the fire.

44. *Spit*—an iron pin on which meat is skewered for roasting.

45. *The clock hath stricken etc.*—In other words, it has struck twelve upon the clock : and my mistress has made it strike one upon my cheek. (For a fuller explanation of the pun, see Appendix to the notes.)

46. *Make it one upon my cheek*—The idea is this : Though it is twelve o'clock by the clock, yet my mistress has advanced the hour, viz. by making it strike one upon my cheek.

47. *Hot*—angry and irritated.

47. *Because the meat is cold*—i.e., because the dinner is getting spoiled.

49. *Have no stomach*—are not hungry, have not got any appetite for food.

51. *We that know.....pray*—In other words, we who have tasted the pang of hunger and starvation.

52. *Are penitent for your default*—i.e. are made to pay for your fault. (The idea is this : you do not care for food as you have already broken your fast. But we, unfortunate beings, are in a different condition : and we have to suffer for your lateness.)

52. *Are penitent for your default*—have to pay the penalty for your fault.

53. *Stop in your wind*—have done with this long-winded story.

56. *Crupper*—the strap of leather used for keeping a saddle in its place.

58. *Not in a sportive humour*—in no need for jesting.

59. *Dally not*—do not trifle with me.

60. *Being strangers here*—being new-comers in this town.

61. *So great a charge*—such a large sum of money.

61. *From thine own custody*—apart from your own personal care.

60-61. *How darest thou.....custody*—How do you venture to leave such a large sum in the custody of some body else ?

62. *I pray you jest etc.*—Mark how the confusion deepens. Apparently, master and man are on terms of jesting with each other ; and here the master thinks that the man is jesting with him as usual while the man fancies that the master is in one of his humorous moods.

63. *In post*—quickly, in post haste.

64. *I shall be post indeed*—My mistress will make a post of me, *i.e.* will give me a good beating as it I were like some wooden post. (For a fuller explanation of the pun, see Appendix to the Notes.) (In Elizabethan taverns, scores were sometimes chalked on wooden posts ; and it is to this that 'post' in l. 64 refers.)

64-65. *If I return...pale*—**Expl.** If I return without you, my mistress will make a very post of me—for she will score your fault upon my head. In other words, she will give me a good beating upon my head.

66. *Maw*—stomach.

66. *Should be your clock*—*i.e.* should remind you of your hour of dinner.

67. *Without a messenger*—*i.e.*, without the need of a messenger having to be sent to you.

66-67. *Methinks.....messenger* —**Expl.** My stomach serves me as my clock—it always reminds me of the hour of dinner ; and I wish that it were so with you also, for it would save us poor servants a lot of trouble.

68. *Out of season*—untimely, unsuitable.

69. *A merrier hour*—when I am in a better mood for jesting.

72. *Have done your foolishness*—A truce to your jesting. (The usual phrase is—'have done *with* your foolishness.')

73. *How thou.....charge*—where you have kept the money ; what arrangement you have made for the custody of the money.

74. *My charge*—my duty. (Notice again the pun upon the word 'charge.' Ant. S. asks Dromio—'how have you disposed of your charge ?' meaning 'where have you kept the money ?')

Dromio puns and replies—'my only charge, i. e., my only duty was to bring you home'.)

75. *Phoenix*—viz., at the sign of the Phoenix.

79. *That merry sounce of yours*—that witty head of thine ; thy head which persists in jesting when I am out of humour.

80. *That stands on tricks*—persists in jesting.

80. *Undisposed*—disinclined.

82. *I have some marks etc.*—**Expl.** I have received some marks (i. e., of beating) from you, and some marks also from your wife ; but all these marks taken together would not amount to the number of one hundred.

85. *If I should pay your worship*—**N. B.** Notice how the pun is kept up. 'You ask me to repay your marks (money) ; but if I were to repay the marks which I have actually received from you (i. e., the beatings which I have received from you, would you like that so very much ?

85. *Those again*—viz., the marks which I have actually received from you.

85. *If I should pay.....again*—in other words if I were to pay you in your own coin ; if I were to give you blow for blow.

91. *Flout me*—mock me, scoff at me.

91. *Wilt thou.....face*—Will you persist in jesting to my very face ?

92. *Take you that*—i. e., take that as a reward for your jests.

93. *Hold your hands*—stop beating me.

94. *Take my heels*—the usual phrase is—'take to my heels'—i. e., run away.

95. *Some device or 'other*—by some strange trick or other.

96. *Is over-raught*—has been cheated.

97. *Cozenage*—all manner of trickery and deception.

98. *Nimble jugglers*—deft and expert magicians, people possessing great sleight of hand.

99. *Dark-working sorcerers*—sorcerers that delight in working evil.

99. *Change the mind*—viz., by producing all sorts of delusions.

100. *Soul-killing, witches*—It has been proposed to transpose the epithets 'dark-working' and 'soul-killing.' But Shakespeare is evidently using conventional expressions, and hence there is hardly any necessity for the change.

100. *Deform the body*—twist and distort the body.

101. *Mountebanks*—quacks.

101. *Prating mountebanks*—quacks talking glibly about the nostrums which they have for sale.

102. *Liberties of sin*—**N. B.** This has been explained in two different ways : (1) libertiness of sin, i. e., people having a charter to commit sin as it were ; licensed offenders ; (2) shameful liberties, i. e., licentious actions.

103. *If it prove so*—if this happens to be actually the case, i. e., if the town is really full of such trickery and deception

## ACT II.

### SCENE 1.

[A scene which gives us an insight into the jealous character of Adriana, wife of Antipholus E. and thus prepares the ground for some of the subsequent developments of the story ]

1. *That in such haste*—"That" refers to the slave in the previous line.

2. *That.....master*—the servant whom I sent in such a hurry to find out his master.

5. *Somewhere gone*—i. e., has gone to the house of some merchant in order to have dinner.

6. *Never fret*—don't vex yourself unnecessarily.

7. *Master of his liberty*—i. e., is or ought to be the master of his own actions.

8. *Time is their master*—In other words, they are very much at the mercy of circumstances. (Being engaged in outdoor pursuits, their movements are liable very much to be controlled

by circumstances, and so they cannot always regulate their hours.)

7-8. *Man is master.....master*—Notice the slight quibble in 'master, master.' 'Time is the master of man, and man is the master of his own liberties.'

8. *When they see time*—according as they find opportunity.

8-9. *When they see time.....come*—In other words, their coming and going will be regulated according to opportunities.

10. *Why should their liberty*—**N. B.** An interesting discussion now ensues—perhaps one of the earliest recorded in English literature—about what may be called the 'rights of woman' question. Adriana who is something of a suffragette before her time is angry at the idea that men should have more liberty of action than women.

10. *Their liberty*—their freedom of movement.

11. *Because their business....door*—The reason seems to be curiously inconclusive. Luciana's idea is this: Their occupation lies out of doors; consequently they are at the mercy of circumstance; and therefore we ought to allow them a certain latitude of action.

12. *When I serve him so*—if I take a similar liberty for myself.

12. *He takes it ill*—he will be offended if I do so.

13. *Know he is the bridle of your will*—Luciana, it appears, is a thorough supporter of the absolute right of the male. Her meaning amounts to this: 'He has every right to be offended at your assumption of liberty; and at the same time you must tamely submit to any liberty that he assumes for himself. And why? because you must know that he is the biddle of your will—that your will and action must be regulated by his wishes.'

13. *Is the bridle of your will*—has been placed in a position of authority over you.

14. *None but asses*—only complete idiots.

14. *Will be bridled so*—will consent to be lorded over in such a way.

15. *Why, headstrong liberty*—**N. B.** This must be taken in close connection with the sentence that precedes. Luciana's

meaning may be thus fully expressed : 'You have said that only asses will consent to be bridled or checked in the exercise of their will. But those who are headstrong—those who are too fond of indulging their self-will—are sure to be scourged by fortune.

15. *Lash'd*—**N. B.** It has been sometimes proposed to read 'leashed' (coupled) for 'lashed or that the reading 'ashed' be explained as meaning 'leashed'. But I do not think that either suggestion is happy ; and the most satisfactory sense will be obtained by taking 'lash'd' in its ordinary sense as meaning 'whipped' ; 'scourged'.

15. *Headstrong liberty*—liberty that refuses to be controlled, that refuses to submit to the bridle.

16. *There is nothing situate" etc.*—**N. B.** Luciana proceeds to develop her meaning still further. She has said that headstrong liberty will be scourged with misfortune ; and now she emphasises her meaning by the general proposition that there is nothing in the universe but submits to some species of control or other.

16. *Heaven's eye*—meaning the sun. *Nothing.....eye*—nothing upon which the sun shines, i. e., nothing in this universe.

17. *Hath his bound*—is checked or limited in some sort or other.

18. *The winged fowls*—i. e., the feathered creatures of the air.

19. *Are their males' subjects*—are subject to the control of the male creatures of their species.

20. *Men more divine*—**N. B.** The idea is this : since beasts, fishes and fowls are all subject to the control of their own males, we human females also must be similarly subject to the control of men—seeing that men are so superior in sense and intellect to the males of birds, fishes and beasts.

20. *More divine*—i. e., more divine than the males of birds, fishes and fowls.

21. *Lords of the wide...seas*—men who are masters of earth and sea both.

21. *Wide world*—here referring to the earth as, different from the sea

22. *Indued with*—endowed with ; furnished with.

22. *Intellectual sense and souls*—i. e., understanding and moral sense.

23. *Of more pre-eminence.....fowls*—men who are the masters of fishes and fowls, and who, in any case, are greater than fishes and fowls both intellectually and morally.

24. *Are masters.....lords*—must be the masters and lords of their females. (Seeing that men are possessed of intellect and moral sense and seeing that they exercise dominion over birds, fishes and beasts, it is right and proper that they should exercise dominion over human females also.—But the necessary implication of this argument is that human females also are on the same level with birds, fishes and beasts.)

25. *Let your will.....accords*—Let your will be in harmony with the will of your husband.

26. *This servitude*—this utter servility of disposition.

27. *Troubles of the marriage bed*—the inevitable misery of the married condition.

28. *You would bear some sway*—This is in the nature of an interrogatory. Adriana says—‘When you marry, you would surely wish to exercise some control over your husband.’

28. *Bear some sway*—exercise some control, viz., in the management of domestic affairs.

29. *Ere I learn love*—Mark how cleverly Luciana parries the question. Before I learn to love, i. e., before I accept any proposal of marriage—I shall school myself to obedience.’

30. *Start some otherwhere*—begin to love somebody else ; is faithless to you.

**N.B.** It has been proposed to read *here* for *where* so that the sentence would read—‘If your husband starts some other here,’ meaning if your husband discovers some other object of love. This by itself would no doubt yield a very suitable interpretation ; but then it does not agree with the sentence that follows.

31. *I would forbear*—i. e., forbear to heap reproaches upon him ; forbear to upbraid him unnecessarily.

*Till he come...forbear*—**Expl.** If my husband went somewhere else I should not begin by upbraiding him beforehand ; I would first wait for his explanation before taking him to task.



32. *Patience unmoved*—Notice the sarcastic implication in Adriana's speech : From your sentiment you would seem to be the very embodiment of patience ; and then she proceeds to moralise upon this curious frame of mind. She says that Luciana can afford to be patient, because, as yet, she has no real occasion for grievance though she affects to be so unmoved and quiet.

33. *Can be meek*—can afford to be meek.

33. *Have no other cause*—have no real cause to vex themselves.

34. *A wretched soul etc.*—Adriana proceeds to develop her meaning by giving an illustration—'When a person weeps from care or grief, we offer him words of consolation and ask him not to shed tears. But *we* also weep and grieve when afflicted with misfortune ourselves.'

34. *Bruised with adversity*—crushed under the weight of misfortune.

35. *Bid be quiet*—ask them not to weep.

36. *Were we burdened...pain*—when we suffer from a similar affliction.

37. *As much.....complain*—we would mourn and complain just like themselves or even more.

38. *No unkind mate*—no cruel husband.

39. *With urging helpless patience*—by urging me to be meek and patient.

39. *Wouldst relieve me*—you seek to console me.

40. *To see.....bereft*—to see yourself forsaken and deserted in a similar manner.

40. *Like right bereft*—bereft (i. e., deserted) exactly like myself.

41. *This fool-begged patience.....left*—this patience which makes you look like a very fool, so that a person would be justified in begging you for a fool from the Court of Wards. **N. B.** Courts of Wards for minor heirs of property were established in the reign of Henry VIII ; and the reference here is to the custom of 'begging a person for a fool' from such a court, viz., praying to be entrusted with the guardianship of a person on the ground that he is a fool and unable to look after his own property.—Perhaps the passage is hopelessly corrupt. But the

reading 'fool-begged' with the interpretation we have given above yields a very satisfactory explanation.

42. *To try*—viz., to see whether your prophecies are fulfilled, if only as a matter of experiment.

43. *Your man*—your husband.

44. *Tardy*—late.

44. *Is your.....at hand*—Is he anywhere near?

45. *He is at two hands with me*—i. e., he has been beating me. (For a fuller explanation of the pun, see Appendix to the Notes.)

47. *Knowest thou his mind*—Do you know what he means?

48. *He told his mind etc.*—**N. B.** Notice the quibbling of which the whole speech is full. Adriana has asked—'do you know his mind?' meaning 'has he communicated his intention to you?' To this Dromio answers:—'yes, he told his mind very plainly upon my ears—(i. e., he cuffed me soundly to indicate his feeling). But all the same I could not understand his meaning.'

49. *Beshrew his hand*—Curse upon his hand (meaning the hand which had given him blows.) [Notice again the quibble in *hand*—meaning (1) 'hand' in its literal sense; and (2) hand-writing.]

The whole idea can be thus expressed: "People express their meaning by writing with their hand. My master also expressed his meaning with his hands, viz., by giving me blows. But just as people cannot gather the meaning when the hand-writing is bad, so—curse upon his hand!—I could not understand what my master meant."

50. *Doubtfully*—vaguely, obscurely.

50. *Spake he so doubtfully*—**N. B.** Notice the quibble upon 'doubtfully' any 'plainly'; also upon 'feel'. Luciana says—"Did he speak so vaguely that you could not feel (guess at) his meaning?" Dromio answers, "Nay, he beat me so plainly that I felt his meaning well enough but could not understand it."

50. *Feel his meaning*—i. e., form a guess at his meaning.

51-52. *Plainly.....doubtfully*—i. e., *plainly* for the sense but *doubtfully* as to the understanding. (His blows were so sound that they were plain enough to feel but difficult to understand.)

52. *Withal*—also, at the same time.

55. *He hath great care to please his wife*—He finds it a great trouble to do what his wife requires.

56. *Horn-mad*—meaning stark, staring mad. But the phrase is also applied to cuckolds, and Adriana understands the word in that sense.

58. *Cuckold*—i. e., a man whose wife is faithless to him.

59. *Stark mad*—mad outright.

64. *Hang up thy mistress*—We would now say—‘hang thy mistress.’

69. *Quoth who*—Who was it that said so? (Luciana can hardly bring herself to believe that Antipholus would be so rude; and hence this question.)

72. *My errand*—my message, i. e., the message which he ought to have given me.

*Due unto my tongue*—which he ought to have entrusted to my tongue; i. e., which he ought to have given in words so that I could deliver it to you with my tongue.

73. *I thank him*—‘Thanks to him’, as we may say.

73. *Upon my shoulders*—viz., in the shape of blows upon my head.

70-71. *My errand.....shoulders*—**Expl.** He ought to have given his message by word of mouth, so that I could have borne it upon my tongue. But, instead of that, I have been obliged to bear it upon my shoulders. viz., in the shape of blows upon my head.

76. *Be new beaten home*—only to get a fresh bout of beating.

78. *I will break thy pate across*—**N. B.** Again notice the pun which has been fully explained in the paraphrase. Adriana simply means—‘I will break your head.’ But Dromio takes it literally as meaning ‘break your head so as to make the sign of a cross upon it.’

79. *He will bless that cross etc.*—The idea is this “You say that you will break my head and thus make a sign of the cross upon it. And when your husband find this sign of the cross upon my head, he will bless it again, viz., by giving me a fresh dose of beating.”

80. *Between you*—i. e., between your blessing and his.

80. *I shall have a holy head*—**Expl.** If my head is blessed twice, once by you and once by him, it will surely grow to be a holy one in consequence.

82. *Round*—In the double sense of (1) brusque, curt ; (2) spherical, globular.

82-83. *Am I so round.....thus*—**Expl.** Between you and your husband, you seem to treat me like a football. But am I so round (in shape) that you mistake me for a football ?

[There might be some excuse for treating me like a football if I were as round (brusque ; spherical) as you are. But am I so very round then ?]

85. *If I last in this service*—if I survive this constant kicking about.

85. *You must case me in leather*—You must furnish me with a suit of leather just as a football is cased in a wrapper of leather,

86. *Lowereth*—frowns, appears gloomy.

84. *How impatience...face*—What a look of angry impatience sits upon your face !

87. *Minion*—unworthy favourite ; here meaning ‘loose woman.’

87. *His company.....grace*—He will bestow his company upon loose and unworthy women.

88. *Starve.....looks*—pine away for want of a kind look.

89. *Homely age*—age which has the effect of making people homely.

89. *Took*—robbed.

90. *He hath wasted it*—has ravaged my beauty.

91. *Discourse*—conversation.

92. *Sharp*—keen, witty.

92. *If voluble.....marr'd*—if I have lost the faculty of brisk and animated conversation.

93. *'Unkindness etc.*—It is his cruel treatment which has produced this defect.

94. *Their gay vestments etc.*—viz., the gorgeous dresses of his merry companions.

94. *Bait*—tempt, seduce.

95. *That is not my fault*—The idea is this : It is not my fault that I cannot procure dresses equally gay. (If my dresses are not gay as theirs, the fault is not mine but my husband's—he is the master of my property and does not give me money enough with which to dress myself.)

95. *Is master of my state*—owns all my property.

96. *Ruins*—defects, features of ugliness.

96-97. *What ruins.....ruin'd*—If there is any ruin (decay) in me, it is he who is the author of such a ruin.

97. *Ground*—cause, occasion.

98. *Defeatures*—ugliness, disfigurement.

98. *Fair*—in the sense of beauty, fairness.

98. *Decayed fair*—my loss of beauty.

99. *Sunny*—kind, cheerful.

100. *Too unruly deer*—one who will not submit to be kept within bounds ; a wanton and unruly creature. [Note the pun in 'deer'—deer and dear (precious)]

100. *Breaks the pale*—overleaps the boundary-wall ; breaks away from the confines of domesticity.

101. *Feeds from home*—i. e., makes himself merry (otherwise.) In the case of a deer, it would mean 'feeds—grazes in some other pasture apart from home.' In the case of the husband, it would mean, 'takes his pleasure with other women.'

100-01 *Too unruly deer.....home*—**Expl.** He is very dear—very precious to me ; but then he is an unruly deer, and so he breaks away from home and makes himself merry elsewhere.

101. *I am but his state*—I am used as a mask—a stalking horse under cover of which he pursues his licentious amours.

101. *Stale*—**N. B.** . In Elizabethan English, this word is used in many different senses—(1) a decoy or bait with which to tempt the birds for fowling; (2) a stalking horse, a pretence; (3) a laughing stock; (4) a prostitute; and (5) the urine of horses.—Here it seems possible that the second and third senses have been rolled into one.

102. *Self-harming jealousy*—injurious to one's own self.

102. *Self-harming jealousy*—so called because the jealous person, by distressing and vexing his own spirit, injures himself more than anybody else.

103. *Unfeeling fools*—people, incapable of feeling their loss, like yourself.

103. *Can.....dispense*—can afford to put up with these wrongs.

104. *Doth homage*—pays his tribute of love and respect.

104. *I know.....otherwhere*—I know that he loves people other than myself.

105. *Lets*—hinders, prevents.

107. *Would that alone etc.*—**N. B.** Another corrupt sentence of which the right reading cannot be restored. But the meaning may be thus given: He promised to give me chain; but I should be quite willing that he would keep back this chain 'if only he kept fair faith with my marriage-bed.' In other words, if he were true to me I would not mind loss of the chain.

107. *Would that alone,.....detain*—I wish that he would keep back this chain. *So*—provided that.

108. *Keep fair quarter*—i. e., keep terms; keep faith.

109. *Rest enamelled*—i. e., polished and refined to the highest degree.

110. *Lose his beauty*—viz., when the enamel wears off. (*His*—its)

110. *Bides still*—retains its value.

111. *Often touching*—constant handling.

111-12. *Will wear gold*—will wear away even the value of gold.

112. *Hath a name*—has once succeeded in establishing a reputation for himself.

113. *By falsehood.....shame*—will not wholly lose that reputation however false or corrupt he might subsequently become.

109. *I see the jewel best enamelled etc.*—N. B. The points of the comparison can be thus given in parallel columns :

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. The best enamelled jewel will lose its beauty.   | 1. The man of the best and highest character may in course of time lose that character.   |
| 2. But though constant handling may tarnish the quality of gold, yet the gold remains gold, i.e. does not altogether lose its value | 2. But though his character may be tarnished in course of time, yet, when he has established a solid reputation, that reputation does not altogether wear away. |

114. *Since that my beauty etc.*—N. B. She now applies her former generalisation in her own case : her meaning may be thus fully expressed : Since my husband has already established a high reputation, that reputation will not altogether wear away even if his character may have become tarnished now. On the other hand, while *he* cannot lose his reputation, I am losing my beauty every day. Thus, since the match between us is unequal—since *he* will never lose his reputation while I am daily losing my beauty—my only resource is to weep and die.

114. *Cannot please his eye*—fails to be acceptable to him.

115. *I will weep.....away*—I will weep away and thus lose even the little beauty that has been left to me.

116. *Fond fools*—foolish creatures

116. *Mad jealousy*—vain, causeless jealousy.

116. *Serve not jealousy*—minister to the cause of jealousy, viz., by vexing themselves unnecessarily.

## SCENE II.

[There are two elements in this scene.

In the first place, we have some excellent fooling between master and man—between Antipholus S. and Dromio S.

In the second place, we have further stage in the development of the errors—Antipholus S. being now mistaken for Antipholus E. by the wife and sister-in-law of the latter.]

1. *Is laid up*—has been deposited in safety.
2. *Heedful*—careful, prudent.
3. *Is wander'd forth*—has gone out.
3. *In care to seek me out*—trying to find me out.
4. *By computation*—by his own reckoning; according to his own sense of direction.
4. *Mine host's report*—the inn-keeper's direction.
5. *I could not speak with Dromio*—I had no proper speech with him.
- 5-6. *I could not speak with Dromio.....mistake*—His idea is that he saw Dromio but had no proper speech with him as he mistook the latter away in his impatience. But as a matter of fact, he had neither seen nor talked with Dromio in the interval; and it was Dromio E., his brother's servant, whom he had met and with whom he says that he had no proper speech.
7. *Merry humour*—jesting mood.
8. *Strokes*—blows.
8. *As you love.....again*—**Expl.** Presume to jest with me again if only you want to have more blows.
9. *You know no Centaur*—That was the humour of your jest when you met me last!
10. *Your mistress.....dinner*—that was the burden of our merriment.
13. *What answer, Sir*—Of course Dro. S. is quite taken aback, for he had never had any such conversation with his master.
17. *Time didst.....receipt*—you even denied having received any gold from me.
19. *For which.....displeased*—I hope you understood that you had annoyed me thoroughly.



*In my vein*—in this jesting, gamesome mood.

22. *Dost thou jeer...teeth*—Do you still persist in mocking me?

22. *Flout me in the teeth*—mock me in my very face.

23. *Take thou that etc.*—meaning 'take this blow.'

24. *Your jest is earnest*—A pun upon the double sense of the word *earnest*, meaning (1) serious; as well as (2) earnest-money, something paid in advance as part-payment for a thing.

25. *Upon what bargain etc.*—N. B. Dromio first says—'your jest is turning into earnest'; and then, quibbling upon the word *earnest*, he says—'why do you pay this earnest to me'—Why do you make this advance-payment to me—what bargain do you expect in return?

25. *Do you give it me*—it, viz., this earnest (meaning earnest money.)

25. *Upon what bargain*—on what condition; in expectation of what return.

27. *Fool*—licensed jester.

28. *Your sauciness*—your impertinence, meaning yourself—impertinent as you are.

29. *Make a common.....hours*—You will intrude upon me even in my hours of preoccupation, just as people may intrude upon the village-common. (*Commons* were the waste tracts of land found in every English village and which were used as the common property of the villagers.)

30. *When the sun shines*—In his own case it would mean, when my mood is genial and sportive; when I am in good humour.

30. *Foolish gnats*—mataphorically applying to such foolish persons as Dromio.

30-31. *When the sun shines.....benms*—N. B. The idea is this: Let gnats come out when the sun shines, but let them go back to their crannies when it is dark. Similarly, fools like you may make sport when my humour is genial, but let them remain at a distance when my mood is serious.

30. *Gnats*—meaning small insects like gnats.

31. *Crannies*—holes and crevices.

32. *Know my aspect*—consult my mood of mind. 'Aspect' is an astrological term applied to the beneficent or malignant influence of planets.

33. *Fashion...looks*—adjust your behaviour in harmony with my expression. In other words, behave as you find me inclined to behave.

34. *I will beat.....sconce*—I will drive this lesson into your head by beating. (The idea is this: Either learn to behave voluntarily yourself, or I shall beat this lesson home into your head.)

34. *Sconce*—Note how Dro. S. will presently play upon the double sense of the word 'sconce'. (Of course Ant. S. used it in the sense of *head*; but Dro. S. takes it also in its literal sense as meaning a small round-shaped fort.)

35. *Sconce call you it*—Dro. S's meaning may be thus expressed: 'You call my head a sconce! Ah, and that explains us to why you start hammering against it! But I should be very glad if you take my head not as a sconce but as a simple head and thus leave off battering at it.' (Perhaps it is paying me a compliment to take my head as a sconce; but I shall gladly do without this compliment if only you leave off battering my head.)

37. *I must get a sconce etc.*—Note how Dromio starts a second pun upon another sense of *sconce*, taking it as meaning a helmet.

36-37. *As you use these.....sconce*—**Expl.** You have taken my head for a sconce (fort) and therefore have started battering against it. But if you persist in these blows long, I shall really have to procure a sconce (helmet) for my head.

37. *Insconce it*—fortify my head, i. e., by placing in a sconce or helmet.

37-38. *Else I shall.....shoulders*—If I do not take this protection—if I do not case my head in a helmet, I shall soon have to search for my wit in my shoulders. **N. B.** The idea is this: Generally speaking, a man's wit or intellect is to be found in his head. But if you go on with these blows of yours, my head will soon be blown off; and then my head being absent I shall have to search for my wit in my shoulders.

41. *Nothing.....beaten*—I know of no cause for this beating—only I know the fact that I am beaten.

43. *And wherefore*—Of course, there is no difference in meaning between 'why' and 'wherefore'; and Dromio is only playing, upon the common proverb that 'every *why* has its *wherefore*.' The proverb means, 'if there is any, *why* there must be some *wherefore*'; and so Dromio says, "you must not only give the *why* but also the *wherefore* of this beating."

45. *Flouting me*—scoffing at me.

46. *Urging it the second time*—i. e., repeating your offence.

47. *Out of season*—inopportune.

48. *In the why...reason*—Dromio means that there is no real reason in the double reason of his master.

51. *This something*—meaning this beating.

51. *For nothing*—for doing no offence.

51. *For this something.....nothing*—This beating is something, and you have given it to me for nothing—for no cause whatever; and therefore I must thank you for your kindness in giving me something in return for nothing. (Of course, this is ironical; and Antipholus' speech in reply is equally ironical.)

53. *Make you amends*—give you compensation.

53. *Make you amends.....something—Expl.* You complain that I have given you something for nothing. Well, that is a fault which is easily mended; and I shall give you nothing when you happen to do something for me.

55. *The meat wants.....have*—The meat has not got what I have, viz., a basting, and therefore is not quite fit to be eaten even now. [The reference is to the double sense of *basting* which means, (1) beating and (2) a process in the preparation of meat.]

56. *In good time*—at the due season. [What he means is this: "You say that the meat has not got what you have; well there is a time for all things and the meat also will get it in good time."—Perhaps he does not quite understand what Dromio is driving at; but he wants to keep up his end of the

gun ; and so he says—'if the meat has not got it, it will get it in good time. But by the way, what is this precious thing ?'

58. *'Twill be dry*—If the meat is not well basted, then it will be dry meat.

59. *I pray you eat none of it*—alluding to the common superstition that the eating of dry meat was supposed to make people choleric.

61. *Purchase me*—procure for me.

61. *Dry basting*—Lit. dry beating ; beating unaccompanied by bloodshed.

61-62. *Lest it make...basting*—The point of Dromio's jest may be thus brought out : 'If you eat dry meat, it will make you choleric, and thus procure for me another bout of dry basting.'

63-64. *There's a time for all things*—**N.B.** Antipholus's first bout of jesting—viz., basting, dry basting etc. has been finished ; and now a second chapter is going to be opened about hair, wit, baldness etc.

63-64. *There's a time for all things*—Ant. S. quotes this proverb sententiously, but Dro. S. is prompt with a jesting reply.

65-66. *Before.....choleric*—if you had been in your usual good humour ; if you had not been so angry as now.

65. *I durst.....that*—**Expl.** You say that there is a time for all things ; but if you had been in a jesting mood, I would have denied your proposition.

67. *By what rule*—meaning 'upon what ground ?'

68-69. *As plain as the plain bald etc.*—Note the jest in the double sense of *plain*, meaning (1) clear, manifest ; (2) smooth.

68. *Plain bald pate etc.*—referring to the fact that Time was conventionally represented as an old man with a bald head having just one tuft of hair in front—whence the proverb 'to catch time by the forelock.'

71-72. *There's no time.....nature*—Here is how Dromio makes good his point—'You say that there is a time for all things ; but there is no time for at least one thing, viz., for a bald man to grow hair again.' The idea is this—'Everything

else can be done in time but a bald man cannot recover his hair however much he may try.

73. *By fine and recovery*.—Of course there is a manifest quibble in the phrase.—‘You say that a bald man cannot recover his hair, but can’t he do so by process of fine and recovery?’

73. *Fine and recovery*.—referring to a legal process of considerable intricacy. **N. B.** Formerly it was very difficult to effect any sale or conveyance of land in England; but the matter could be arranged by a legal fiction. Thus if ‘A’ wanted to sell land to ‘B,’ the process would be something like this:—‘B’ would appear in a Court of Law and claim the land as belonging to himself. Then ‘A’ also would appear and acknowledge B’s claim, pay him a fine for compensation and pretend to hold the land as B’s lessee; and the transfer of ownership from ‘A’ to ‘B’ would be completed by this fictitious and round-about process which was known as the process of ‘fine and recovery.’

74. *To pay a fine for a periwig*.—Mark how the jest is kept up. Dromio says: “Just as land can be conveyed by the process of fine and recovery, so a man can grow his hair also by the process of fine and recovery; and this is how it will be done. He will buy a wig (thus paying a *fine*, as it were) and then *recover* his head with this wig (which of course is some body else’s lost hair.)

76. *Why is time such a niggard etc.*.—Another jest is now started which is finally closed at 105.

76. *Such a niggard of hair*.—so sparing in the matter of hair.

77. *Excrement*.—lit. something that *goes out* from one

77. *So plentiful an excrement*.—so abundantly to be found in the world.

78. *Because it is a blessing etc.*.—**N. B.** Ant. S. has asked—‘seeing that hair is such a plentiful commodity in the world, why is it that Time should be niggardly in the matter of possessing hair himself?’ Dro. S. answers—Evidently hair is a blessing which time reserves specially for beasts; and so far as men are concerned, though he gives them little of hair if he makes up the deficiency by giving them plenty of wit. •

78. *Bestows on beasts*—reserves specially for beasts.

81. *Why but there is...hair*—If Time has stinted men in the matter of hair he has given them plenty of wit. (Throughout this passage there is reference to the common proverbial opposition between hair and wit. The idea seems to have been 'the more hair and the less wit.') . . .

81. *There's many a man etc.*—You say that time has stinted men in the matter of hair and has therefore endowed them with plenty of wit, but I find there are many men who have more hair than wit.

83. *Not a man of those*—i. e. not one of these hairy people

83-84. *Ha! the wit.....hair*—has sufficient knowledge to lose his hair as he grows old. Dromio's meaning can be thus fully expressed: 'I had said that men have comparatively less hair than beasts because they have more wit. You point out in reply that many people have more hair than wit. But my rejoinder is that even these hairy people have wit enough to lose their hair in course of time.' Of course Dromio refers to the fact that men generally grow bald as they grow old.

83-84. *Not a man...his hair*—Even these hairy people are intelligent enough to lose their hair when they grow old.

85-86. *Thou didst conclude.....wit*—Ant. S. triumphantly points to an apparent contradiction in Dromio's speech. "You now say that hairy people have wit enough to lose their hair but only a little while before you were suggesting that hairy people are fools."

85. *Plain dealers*—foolish, simple people.

87. *The plainer dealer etc.*—Dromio is again quibbling upon the double sense of plain—viz., simple and smooth.

87 *The plainer dealer...lost*—'If they are plain people that only indicates that they have lost their hair, too soon.' (Of course the reference is to the plainness and smoothness of head produced when hair is lost.)

87-88. *He loseth it.....policy*—There is a reason for this loss of hair.

87. *He loseth it*—he, i.e. the plain dealer, the man who has lost his hair.

88. *In a kind of policy*—upon a sort of plan.

91. *Nay not sound*—**N. B.** Antipholus's idea can be thus given ; you say that your reasons are sound ; but there can't be any sound reason about such an unsound business as the falling off of hair. (We are now upon the matter of losing hair ; and this is such an unsound, rotten business that there is no question of any sound reason about it.)

92. *Sure ones*—If you won't allow me to have the sound reason, well, I shall speak of sure reasons.

93. *Not sure*—But here also Antipholus has an objection.—Just as there can't be any sound reason about such an unsound business as the falling off of hair, so there can't be any sure reason about a thing which is so essentially false.—(Of course there is a reference to the fact that when hair is fallen off it has to be replaced by false hair.)

94. *Certain ones*—**N. B.** Dromio has at last hit upon the right word. His reason cannot be sound because baldness is essentially unsound, his reason cannot be sure because baldness leads on to the wearing of false hair ; but there are no such objections to *certain* reasons.

97. *Tiring*—hair-dressing.

99-100. *You would all this time.....all things*—you introduce all this rigmarole to prove your original proposition, viz., that there is *no time* for *all things*.

101. *And did*—i. e. I have succeeded in proving the proposition.

103. *Your reason was not substantial etc.*—You have proved that bald men do not recover their hair, but you have not proved as to why they cannot recover their hair.

105. *Mend it*—make up the deficiency, supply the gap in my reasoning.

105. *Time himself is bald etc.*—Dromio's answer can be thus given ; "Bald men cannot recover their hair because time itself is bald and wants to have a lot of bald followers."

107. *Bald conclusion*—a lame conclusion.

108. *Wafts us yonder*—beckons to us from over there.

109. *Look strange*—look as if you do not know me

110. *Hath.....aspects*—is in the enjoyment of your favour

112. *Unurged*—without any pressure or entreaty on my part.

113. *Were music.....ear*—sounded sweetly in your ears

116. *Sweet savour'd*—of good relish.

118. *How comes it*—How does it happen ?

119. *Estranged from thyself*—a stranger, even to your own self. We might expect Adriana to say “estranged from me.” But evidently she makes her point thus : “you and I being husband and wife form one undivided whole ; and therefore, to be a stranger to me is the same thing as to be a stranger to yourself.” “In being false to me, you are false to your own true self.”

121. *Incorporate*—growing into one substance so to say ; forming one undivided and indivisible whole.

122. *Am better.....better part*—“am something better even than being your better half.” Wives are spoken of as the better part of their husband ; but as a matter of fact, they are more even than their better half.

123. *Do not.....from me*—do not make any wilful breach between yourself and me.

124-128. *As easy mayest thou too*—**N.B.** Adriana’s idea can be thus given. Having once united yourself with me in marriage you will find it impossible, even if you wish to do so, to separate yourself wholly from me.—Adriana illustrates his meaning by an image. “If you let fall a drop of water into the sea, you cannot take away that drop again as it originally was : similarly having united yourself with me, you cannot make a clean cleavage between yourself and me.”

124. *Fall*—let fall.

125. *The breaking gulf*—the sea that breaks against the shore.

126. *Unmingled*—in its pure original form.

129. *Touch thee to the quick*—wound you in the tenderest spot of your being.

131. *Consecrate to thee*—dedicated to yourself.

132. *By ruffian lust...contaminate*—should have received the stain of licentiousness ; should have caught the contagion of lust.



132. *Russian lust*—so called because it deflowers the chastity of mortals.

133. *Spit at me etc.*—i. e. hold me in contumely.

134. *Hurl.....face*—i. e. repudiate your marriage.

135. *Stained*—disgraced.

135. *My harlot brow*—my treacherous face.

136. *Cut the wedding ring*—as not deserving to be worn by me.

137. *Deep-divorcing vow*—a vow of fatal separation.

138. *Thou canst*—that thou art quite capable of behaving like this.

138. *Therefore see thou do it*—**Expl.** I know you are capable of behaving with extreme violence if you suspect that I am growing unfaithful to you ; and therefore you must now make ready to behave with such violence towards me. (Adriana suggests that she will prove false to him ; and her reason is that a stain of licentiousness has been communicated to her by contact with her adulterate husband.

139. *Adulterate blot*—a stain of licentiousness.

140. *My blood...lust*—my blood has been tainted with the infection of lust. (The idea is this . you are licentious ; there has been contact between you and me ; and thence I have been infected by you with the contagion of lust.) Some difficulty has been caused about the word 'grime', but to us it seems perfectly plain that 'grime' should be taken in the sense of filth, smirch.

141. *Thou play false*—you prove unfaithful to the marriage vow.

142. *I do digest...flesh*—I derive this poison by communication from you.

143. *Strumpeted*—made a strumpet of ; converted into a whore.

143. *Thy contagion*—contact with thy evil and licentious body.

144. *Keep...true bed*—keep terms with your true wife ; i.e. remain faithful to your marriage vow.

145. *Unstained*—free from sin.

145. *Undishonoured*—free from shame.

144-45. *Keep then...undishonoured*—Adriana's idea is that there should be mutuality of faith between herself and her husband; 'If you are faithful to me I also shall be faithful to you and consequently you will live free from disgrace.'

146. *Plead you to me*—are you addressing your remarks to me?

148. *As strange...talk*—as much of a stranger to this town as your speech is strange (unintelligible) to me. Mark the play upon the double sense of stranger; (1) strange and (2) unintelligible.

149. *All my wit*—the whole force of my intelligence.

149. *Scanned*—scrutinised.

149-50. *Who every word...understand*—**Expl.** Even if I were to bring the whole force of my wit to bear upon your speech—even then I would fail to understand a single word of yours.

152. *Wont*—used, accustomed.

157. *Buffet thee*—gave you blows.

157. *In his blows*—while thus beating him.

158. *Denied...wife*—denied that this house was his or that I was his wife.

160. *Compact*—here meaning conversation, intercourse

160. *The course.....compact*—the purport of your conversation.

162. *Even her very words*—viz., the message which I now hear from her.

166. *Inspiration*—divination; intuitive perception.

167. *Your gravity*—your position and dignity in life.

168. *To counterfeit.....slave*—to keep up this mummering with your servant. *partly*

168. *Thus grossly*—in this rude, unmannerly fashion

169. *Abetting him*—aiding and assisting him.

169. *To thwart me.....mood*—to cross my wishes, to provoke and irritate me.

170. *Be it my wrong*—let it be injury sufficient in one.

170. *Are from me exempt*—have separated yourself from me.

171. *Wrong not that wrong*—i. e. do not double your wrong; do not add insult to injury as we may say.

172. *Come*—Notice the change of mood that here comes upon Adriana. Evidently she is a creature of impulse and passes from the extravagance of bitter anger to manifestation of extreme affection.

173. *Thou art an elm etc.*—**N. B.** A beautiful but conventional image. The husband is compared to a stately elm tree while the wife pictured as a vine to him clinging for support and strength.

175. *Makes me.....communicate*—enables me to derive strength from you.

174-75. *Whose weakness.....communicate*—I am weak like a vine while you are strong as a stately elm; and therefore I have been wedded to you in order that I may derive strength and support from you.

176. *Aught*—shameless any vile creature.

176. *Possess thee from me*—tempt you away from my side

176. *It is dross*—know that such a creature is utterly worthless.

177. *Usurping ivy etc.* **N. B.** The metaphor between the elm and the vine is still kept up. The idea may be thus explained: It is the vine which ought properly to cling to the elm. But sometimes the vine is pushed out by such usurping creatures as the brier and the moss; and the strength of the tree is sapped and undermined by the intrusion of these unwholesome plants. Of course, in the case of husband and wife the image could be thus applied. It is the wife who ought properly to cling to the husband. But sometimes the wife is pushed out by a usurping mistress, and the strength of the husband is sapped and undermined thereby.

177. *Ivy, brier etc.*—meaning obnoxious and unwholesome plants

178. *For want of pruning*—for want of being cut out.

178-79. *With intrusion.....sap*—injures thy wholesome strength by intruding upon your body.

179. *Confusion*—ruin, destruction.

180. *Moves me.....theme*—takes me as the subject of his discourse.

181-82. *What was I married.....all this*—Am I dreaming now? or was I married to her in a dream? In other words, which is the reality—my knowledge that she is nothing to me or her assertion that she is my wife? •

183. *Drives.....amiss*—leads my senses astray.

184. *Until.....uncertainty*—till my doubts are fully resolved.

185. *I will entertain.....fallacy*—I will fall in with the humour of the game. (No doubt, it seems to me that this is a delusion; but I shall keep up this delusion—I shall enter into the humour of this game—till I have been able to make certain of my position.) •

187. *Beads*—i. e., the rosary of beads with which the Roman Catholics say their prayers.

187. *Cross me*—make a sign of the cross

188. *O spite of spites*—what an ugly misfortune it is!

189. *Sprite*—same word as 'spirit.'

189. *Goblins*—ghostly creatures, supposed to be of mischievous disposition. •

189. *Fairies...elves*—There was hardly any distinction between them: Only elves were supposed to be a shorter and slightly more mischievous than fairies

190. *Ensnare*—happen.

191. *Suck our breath*—pump us dry.

192. *Why protest thou to thyself*—Why are you muttering to yourself? •

193. *Drone, snail etc*—Notice how all these epithets emphasise the idea of sluggishness.

193. *Drone*—These are bees that do not work for themselves but feed upon the labours of others.

193. *Set*—a foolish creature.

193. *Snail, slug*—There is hardly any difference between the two—the slug also being a kind of the snail. •

• 194. *Transformed*—quite changed.

197. *Thou hast.....form*—you retain your own body.

200. *She*—pointing to Luciana.

200. *I long for grass*—I long to eat grass just as an ass. Of course this is a bit of comic extravagance on the part of Dromio.

203. *No longer will I be a fool*—The hot fit is again upon Adriana. Having addressed Antipholus for some time in terms of tender affection, she again flies off into rage fancying that master and man are both knocking at her.

205. *Laugh...scorn*—make a mock of me.

206. *Come, Sir etc*—We must suppose that her tone now is very peremptory; she is no longer expostulating with her servant but giving orders to him.

208. *Shrine...pranks*—I will make you confess all your follies.

208. *Idle pranks*—The foolish tricks of which you have been guilty.

210. *Say...forth*—say that he is not at home—that he is dining outside.

211. *Play the porter*—act the part of a gate-keeper.

213. *Well advised*—in possession of my senses.

214. *To myself disguised*—not known to myself.

215. *Persever so*—i. e. go on with this game for sometime.

216. *In this mist*—i. e., in this maze of confusion and error.

216. *In this mist.....go*—**Expl.** Perhaps it is risky to enter into this game; but I shall do so whatever risk there may be.

217. *Shall be.....gate*—Shall I have to keep the gate as this woman says?

219. *We dine too late*—We are already too late for dinner.

### ACT III.

#### SCENE I.

[We now reach the heart and kernel of the comic business. While Adriana is dining upstairs with Antipholus S.—under the mistaken impression that he is her husband—the real Simon Pure, the master

of the house himself appears outside, and demand entrance. But the servants, thinking that it must be the mad freak of "some drunkard or lunatic, deny him admittance, and—what is worse—revile him from behind the shut door. Of course, Antipholus E. flies off into a towering rage and a further stage is reached in the development of our Comedy of Errors.]

1. *You must excuse us all*—You must offer the necessary excuses for us. (The idea is this : My wife will naturally take me to task for my delay in coming to dinner and I beg that you will invent some excuse to account for this delay.)

2. *As she would*—is apt to scold us.

2. *When I keep not hours*—when I am unpunctual, when I don't come at the proper time.

3. *Lingered*—loitered.

3. *That I linger'd,.....shop*—that I was detained by business in your shop.

4. *Carcanel*—an ornament, for wearing as a collar round the neck ; a neck-chain.

4. *To see the making etc*—Evidently Antipholus wanted to propitiate his wife by holding out this bribe of the carcanel.

6. *Here's a villain*—referring to his servant Dromio E.

6. *Would' face me down*,—would compel me to believe. (The idea is this I know that the story is false ; and yet by his impudent persistence in the assertion he would have me believe it despite my senses.)

8. *Charged him with*—i.e., taxed him with possessing.

8. *Charged him....gold*—made him responsible for possessing such an amount of money.

9. *That I did deny etc*—(Of course the reference is to Dromio E's meeting with Ant. S. earlier in the day.

10. *By this*—viz., by coming upon me with such a palpably false and absurd story.

12. *Four hand*—i. e., the marks left by your hand.

12. *That you beat.....show*—**Expl.** Your blows left marks upon my body : and these are my best evidence to prove that you beat me at the mart.

13. *The blows.....ink*—In other words, if your blows were legible like writing in ink.

14. *Your own hand-writing.....think*—In other words, I would be able to confront you with evidence in your own hand-writing.

16-17. *So it doth appear.....I bear*—Mark how quickly Dromio takes up his master's words and how cleverly he is parrying them. 'You say that I am a fool : and so I must be—for otherwise I would not put up with this scurvy treatment of yours.'

17. *The wrongs I suffer*—viz., at your hand.

18-19. *I should kick being kicked...of an ass*—**Expl.** At present you hit me with impunity. But if I were to develop the habit of hitting back in return, then you would learn how to beware of me.

18. *I should kick being kicked*—In other words, I ought to hit back in reply.

18. *Being at that pass*—if things come to that pass, i. e. if I develop the habit of returning your blows.

19. *You would keep from my heels*—i. e., would keep at a safe distance from me.

20. *Sad*—serious ; grave.

20. *Our cheer*—the dinner which I shall provide.

21. *May answer my good will*—may be in proportion to the heartiness of my welcome. (My heart is full of good will towards you ; and I should be happy if my dinner also were equally good.)

21. *May answer*—may be in accordance with.

22. *Your dainties*—the dishes which you may provide.

22. *I hold.....dear*—**Expl.** Compared with the heartiness of your welcome, I care little for the delicacies of your table.

23. *O, Signior Balhazar etc.*—**N. B.** One may notice that Ant. E. is altogether a coarse, blunt type of humanity. The good things of the earth are all in all to him, and he cares little for such sentimental considerations as a hearty welcome or a cheerful greeting.

23. *Either flesh or fish*—i. e., whatever the staple article of the dinner might be.

24. *Full of welcome*—and not of good cheer.

24. *Makes...dainty dish*—i. e., is unable to supply the deficiency of good cheer.

24. *A table full of welcome.....dish*—In other words, even the heartiest of greetings are unable to make up for the deficiency of dainty dishes.

25. *Good meat, sir etc.*—**N. B.** But Balthazar sticks to his point. A good dinner, he says, is a commonplace luxury: even a vulgar peasant can offer it sometimes. (But it is only gentlemen who can welcome us properly.)

25. *Is common*—i. e., is a commonplace luxury.

24. *Every churl*—i. e., even a low and base-born creature.

26. *Welcome more common*—i. e., more common even than a good dinner.

27. *Small cheer*—a poor dinner.

27. *Small cheer.....feast*—**Expl.** Even a poor dinner may constitute a very merry entertainment if it is accompanied by hearty hospitality.

28. *Viggardly*—miserly. *Sparing*—abstemious.

29. *Cates*—delicacies.

29. *Take them in good*—Accept them with good will in view of the hearty greeting that lies behind them. (My dinner may be poor, but in view of the hospitality which prompts it I hope that you will accept it with a good will.)

30. *Not with better heart*—not coming from a more hospitable heart.

31. *Bid them*—i. e., bid the servants.

32. *Maud, Brulget etc.*—**N. B.** Here we come to the very kernel of the play, and the comedy is complete. The real master of the house is kept waiting outside, while his own people mock him from within in ignorance of his identity.

32. *Gillian, Ginn*—It has been conjectured that these are meant for Juliana and Jenny.

33. *Mome, malt-horse*—Evidently Dr. S. is mimicking the other's voice from within not knowing that it is his long-lost brother who is the object of his raillery.

33. *Mome*—dolt; blockhead.



33. *Malt-horse*—a brewers' horse; the heavy cart horse that is used for drawing brewers' drays.

33. *Capon*—properly meaning, a cock fattened for eating; here of course a fool, idiot.

34. *Hutch*—a wicket or half door; a sort of door within a door.

35-36. *Dost thou.....too many*—For full explanation see Paraphrase.

35. *Dost thou...avenches*—Do you mean to call up girls by your conjuring tricks?

36. *When one is too many*—According to one commentator this means that there was not a single girl in the house, which of course would be absurd—for at least there was the kitchen maid Luce within.—Evidently the meaning is this: Seeing that even one girl is plague enough, why do you seek to call up so many?

38. *Let him walk etc.*—Evidently Dio. S. does not understand that it is the master of the house himself that is waiting outside. ('My insater' to him simply meant, the master of the fool talking outside.)

38. *Let him walk...feet*—**Expl**—Let him go back to his home, for otherwise he would have to wait long and this long waiting might give him cold in the feet. (Of course, it is upon this that Dio. S. is playing.)

40. *I'll tell you...wherefore*—Again see *paraphrase*. Evidently the expression was a common proverb.

42. *Nor to-day here...must not*—The idea is this: 'If you have not dined yet, then your chance of dining to-day is very feeble indeed.'

43. *One*—possess.

46. *The one*—meaning, my name.

46. *The other*—meaning, his office.

46. *The one.....blame*—My name has never been a source of credit to me while my office has often procured for me a good deal of reproach.

46. *Mickle*—much; considerable.

47. *If thou hadst been... my place*—viz., at the market-place where my master beat me.

48. *Thou wouldst have changed.....name*—In other words, you would have been glad to change either your name or your face—viz., in order to avoid the beating that I got.

4, -48. *If thou hadst been... for a name*—**Expl** At present you boldly proclaim that you are Dromio, but you would not have been so proud of the name if you had been in my place to-day at the mart when I came in for the master's beating. Rather to avoid the beating I got you would have been glad to change either the name or the face.

49. *Coil*—noise ; disturbance.

52. *So tell your master*—This is one of the several points of improbabilities which we may notice in the course of the drama. Luciana surely ought to have recognised her fellow-servant's voice, but evidently she does not.

54. *Have at you with a proverb*—Let me use this proverb against you, let me see whether this proverb strikes home or not. (Evidently, Dio. E. even now fails to grasp the situation. He still thinks that Luciana is keeping up a game with him, and so he says—let me have this proverb at you—let me see whether this strikes you or not.)

54. *Shall I set in my staff*—In other words, do you want to take up your permanent habitation here outside this gate. (To set up one's staff means to make oneself at home, to rest permanently at a place.)

55. *Have at you with another*—**Expl**. If you begin your game of bandying in proverbs, here is one in reply to yours.

55. *When can you tell?*—A proverbial expression of the time which was used for the purpose of evading a question or putting off an enquiry.

59. *I thought...you*—I was only waiting for your permission. (Of course the expression is only sarcastic.)

61. *Come, help etc.*—Evidently Ant. E. has quite lost his patience by this time and has begun hammering at the gate.

62. *Baggage*—meaning, an idle, worthless creature.

63. *For whose sake*—simply meaning, 'why.'

66. *You'll cry for this*—In other words, you will have to pay penalty for this.

66. *If I beat*—even if I have to batter down my own door.

67. *What needs all that*—The idea is this. Why should this man be making such a coil at this door? Can't they be made to stand on the stocks?

69. *By my troth*—upon my word.

71. *Your wife etc.*—Here is another point of improbability in the story, seeing that even Adriana fails to recognise her husband's voice.

72. *This knave*—referring to himself; referring also to the fact that his master has just been called a knave by his mistress.

72. *Would go sore*—would come in for a smart bout of beating.

73. *Here is neither cheer etc.*—Evidently these remarks exchanged aside between Angelo and Balthazar.

73. *Here is neither cheer etc.*—Referring to the previous debate between himself and Ant. E. (Only recently Ant. was singing in praise or hearty greeting; but here at the house there was neither cheer nor greeting.

73. *Either*—one or the other.

74. *We shall part*—i. e. we shall have to part, we shall have to go away.

74. *With neither*—having got neither.

75. *They*—referring to Angelo and Balthazar.

76. *Something in the wind*—i. e., some mystery afoot.

77. *You would say so master*—Dromio takes his master's words literally and plays upon them in its double sense.

77. *You would say so...thin*—**Expl.** You say that there is something in the wind, you would have more occasion to say so if your dress were thin like mine for in that case the wind would bite you sharp.

78. *Your cake*—meaning your dinner.

79. *So bought and sold*—is disappointed; is thwarted in his expectation.

79. *Willow's back*—restless and impatient as a buck in mating time.

81. *Break any breaking here*—*spate*.—If you talk further of any breaking, I shall even break your fool's head.

82. *A man may break a word* etc.—**N.B.** Notice how the Dromios can never miss an opportunity of playing upon words.—The idea is this:—“Why are you offended at the mere mention of the words ‘breaking’? There can be no harm in one kind of breaking at least—viz. the breaking of words, seeing that words are only wind.”

83. *Break it in your face*.—The pun is further kept up. What Dromio means may be thus expressed. “There is no harm in breaking words (bandying remarks)—provided one does not break words (i. e. prove unfaithful) behind one's back. —‘Breaking words’ in the first instance means ‘exchanging words,’ while in the second instance it means ‘proving unfaithful behind words.’”

84. *It seems.....breaking*.—**Expl.** Since you talk so much of breaking, you seem to stand in need of breaking (being eaten) yourself.

85. *Unlute*—base varlet.

86. *How you muck out upon thee*—in other words, you are going on too far. (You are indulging too much in such expressions as ‘out upon you.’)

87. *When fools etc.*—i. e. when things impossible come to pass. (So it is we may say—in a month when there are no Sundays.)

87. *Crow-bar*—a heavy bar of iron with which to break open the door.

89. *For a fish without a fin* etc.—Here is his answer to 79. Ss talk about impossibilities. The idea can be thus given. Addressing Dio. S. the elder Dromio says—“You were talking about fishes without fins and fowls without feathers as if they were impossibilities. Well, here’s one of the impossibilities coming to pass, for we shall presently have a crow-bar, a crow without feathers.”

90. *We'll pluck a crow together*.—In other words, we shall have a good stiff fight between ourselves.

92. *Let it not be so*—Do not proceed to such extremities do not make a public scandal of it.

93. *Herein*—viz. if you proceed to break open your door with a crow-bar.

93. *You were*. ....*reputation*—you will be damaging your own character.

94. *Draw*...*suspect*—expose to the breath of suspicion.

94. *The compass of suspect*—i. e. the circle of suspicion.

95. *Unmolested*—unstained, unbreathed upon.

96. *Once this*. The full meaning is—‘Know this once for all.’

97. *Her years*. This would imply that the wife of Ant. is was older than her husband.

99. *She will seek excuse etc.*—She will be able to offer a plausible explanation of her conduct.

100. *Made against you*—shot against you.

101. *Be ruled by me*—follow my advice.

102. *To the Tiger*—i. e. the inn at the sign of the Tiger.

105. *Offer*—attempt.

106. *In the stirring passage of the day*—during this busy crowded hour of the day.

107. *A vulgar comment*.....*of it*—A coarse and ugly interpretation will be put upon your conduct.

108. *That supposed*—that will be supposed.

108. *The common rout*—the vulgar throng.

109. *Yet ungalled estimation*—a reputation which is still quite without flaw.

108-111. *And that supposed*.....*you are dead*—**Expl.** At present your reputation is quite unstained. But if you follow this violent course, the common rout will entertain all sorts of evil suspicions against your honour—suspicions which may cling to your character even till death.

110. *May with foul intrusion etc.*—i. e. may invade your character.

112. *Slander lives upon succession*—**N.B.** The idea is this. When slander has first attached to a man's character, one slanderer

leads on to another, and thus there is a continual succession of slanders or scandals.

113. *For ever housed.....possession*—**Expl.** Once slander has affected a man's character, it takes up its habitation permanently there. In other words, when a man's reputation has been once tarnished the stain can never be wished out.

114. *You have prevailed*—you have succeeded in dissuading me. *In despite of wrath*—as if to show my defiance of wrath. (My wrath is justified but as if to show my triumph over it I am determined to be merry.)

116. *A wench of excellent discourse*—a merry and sensible girl; a girl possessing excellent powers of entertainment. *Wit!*—i.e., with something wanton and sportive in her character.

117. *Gentle*—shy, modest. *Without dissent*—without any cause.

118-20. *This woman.....withal*—**Expl.** My wife has often reproached me in connection with this woman, though hitherto she has had no justification for it.

122. *By this*—viz. by this time.

125. *The Porcupine*—Evidently the Courtesan bore on her gown a glaring, this sign.

127. *To spite me out*—to provoke and irritate my wife for nothing else.

130. *Shall cost me some expense*—will make me lose some money, on account of the costly chain which I am going to bestow upon this girl.

## SCENE 2.

A scene where we are chiefly marking time and don't go forward with the action of the drama except quite near the end.

As regards the scene itself, the following points may be noted:

(a) First we have a pretty and sentimental love scene between Antipholus and Luciana.

(b) Then there is some excellent fun between Antipholus S and his servant (Dromio S)\* who is running away in much pretended alarm from the aggressive love-making of the fat kitchen-maid.

- (c) Lastly, quite near the end, Antipholus S. is again mistaken for his brother and has a chain pressed upon him by a too-impertunate goldsmith. (Of course, this last error lays the train for quite a number of other errors growing out of it.)]

2. *A husband's office*—the duties of a husband.

1-2. *'And may it be,.....husband's office*—Evidently Ant. S. has already begun making love to Luciana; and the girl is naturally vexed that her sister's husband (as she fancies him to be) should behave thus improperly towards her.

3. *Even in the spring of love*—in the very heyday of love; at the very season when love should flourish most.

3. *Thy love-springs*—i.e. the spring or root of affection in your nature.

2-3. *Shall Antipholus....love-springs root*—**Expl.** You have been married only lately, and therefore this is the time when love should flourish most vigorously in your heart; and yet does your love begin to wither in your heart even thus early?

4. *In building*—i.e. even in the course of growing.

*Grow so ruinous*—become so overwhelmed in ruin.

4. *Shall love.....ruinous*—In other words, must your love be nipped in the very bud? Must it wither even in the very season when it should flourish the most?

5-6. *If you did wed.....kindness*—**Expl.** It may be that you married my sister only for her wealth. But if that be the case, she is still rich and therefore you ought still to be kind to her.

7. *If you like elsewhere*—if you have begun to love some body else.

*By stealth*—viz. unknown to my sister.

8. *Muffle*—clothe, disguise.

*Your false love*—the unworthy love which you have bestowed upon some other person.

*Muffle.....blindness*—It may be that you have proved treacherous to my sister; but all the same, disguise your treacherous feeling under some show of false affection.

9. *Let not.....eye*—In other words, do not flaunt your false love too imprudently before my sister; do not parade it before her very sight.

10. *Thy own shame*—viz. your false love.

*Be not.....orator*—In other words, do not brag of your shameful love before her.

11. *Speak fair*—i. e. talk kindly.

*Become disloyalty*—i.e. wear your disloyalty in a becoming fashion. (It may be that you are disloyal to my sister, but hide your disloyalty under a show of decency).

12. *Harbinger*—forerunner.

*Apparel me.....harbinger*—Disguise your vice so that it may look like the very herald or messenger of virtue.

13. *Tainted*—false, corrupt. *Be tainted*—viz. with your shame and sin.

14. *Carriage*—manner, behaviour.

15. *Be secret>false*—You may be false, but hide your falseness behind a show of virtue.

16. *Simple*—foolish.

*Attaint*—fault, guilt.

17. *To truant with your bed*—to be false to your wife.

(Note the *apparent*—antithesis between bed and board. You may be false to your bed; but why brag of it at the board, viz. when seated at meal with your wife ?)

18. *Hath a bastard fame*—bears a sort of false estimation.

*Shame.....well managed*—**Expl.** If you manage your false armour skilfully, you may still enjoy a sort of reputation though no doubt, that reputation will be of a false, bastard quality.

20. *Are doubled*—their sense of injury is doubled.

*Ill deeds.....evil word*—**Expl.** Shameful deeds become doubly shameful when backed by cruel words.

21. *Poor woman*—referring to the supposed credulity of women.

22. *Being compact of credit*—Connect with woman in the previous line. (We women are compact of credit, i.e. made up of credulity; and hence we are willing to believe whatever you want us to believe.)



23. *Have the arm*—i. e. enjoy the substance of your favours.

*Though others.....sleeve*—The contrast is between *arm* and *sleeve*, which latter is only the case of the arm. Others may enjoy your arm, i.e., the solid reality of your favour; but we shall be content if you give us only your sleeve, i.e. the empty show of your favour.

24. *We in your motion turn*—In other words, our movements are dependant upon yours. (The reference is to the relation between the sun and his attendant satellites.) *You are like the sun* and we are like your planets and satellites, and hence our motion is entirely dependent upon yours.

25. *Get you in again*—enter the house.

27. *Holy*—innocent.

27-28. *It is only sport.....strife*—**Expl.** One may be justly and innocently proud when his mere words have the power of healing strife. (It may make us vain if we have the power of pacifying other people with the mere word of our mouth; but such vanity is innocent and pardonable.)

29. *What your name...is else*—what other name you may have.

30. *What wonder*—what strange miracle.

*You do hit of mine*—You have chanced to guess at my name.

31. *Your grace*—the charm and accomplishment of your person.

31-32. *Less in your knowledge.....divine*—**Expl.** By your knowledge and beauty you appear as the very miracle of the earth—nay, far more divine than the earth itself.

34. *Conceit*—power of understanding.

*My earthy gross conceit*—my understanding which is dull and stupid with the grossness of the earth.

35. *Smothered in error*—choked with follies.

36. *Folded meaning*—the hidden significance.

36. *Your words \*deceit*—your apparently deceitful words.

34-36. *Lay open.....deceit—Expl.* You no doubt are divine, but I am of the earth, earthy; and therefore I entreat that you will lay open to my gross and stupid sense the hidden meaning of your delusive words.

37. *My soul's pure truth*—what I know and feel to be true.

38. *Against my soul's.....unknown field—Expl.* Why do you struggle to make me believe things which I know to be false?

39. *Would you create me new*—Would you endow me with a new existence and personality? (The reference is to the fact that Luciana wanted him to believe that he was a citizen of Ephesus, that Adriana was his wife, and that she herself was his sister-in-law.—Referring to this attempt, Ant. S. says—‘I know that these things are false, yet why do you want me to believe them as true? Or, would you create a new life and personal history for me?’)

40. *Transform me*—change me quite.

*To your power I will yield*—I shall be quite ready to believe what you wish me to believe. (Ant. S. has asked ‘Are you a god that you want to create me anew?’—And now he says ‘yet, you are so beautiful that I am quite willing to believe that you are a goddess and to be changed wholly by you.’)

41. *If that I am I*—In other words, if I have not completely forgotten myself.

43. *Homage*—allegiance, the loyalty of a husband to his wife.

44. *Far more.....decline*—So far from being a husband of your sister I know that my heart is far more inclined to yourself.

45. *Train me not*—Do not lure me on, do not entice me.

45. *O, train me not.....note—Expl.* Your words have the power of luring me on to whatever you like. Only, I pray that you will not entice me to love your sister; rather, entice me for yourself, and I shall be quite ready to fall in love with you.

46. *To drown me.....tears*—Do not tempt me to drown myself in the flood of your sister's tears; in other words, do not tempt me to fall in love with your sister.

47. *Sing, siren etc.*—Notice that Shakhepeare uses *mermaid* and *siren* as synonymous terms. (The *sirens* were those fabulous creatures, half-woman and half-bird, who were mentioned in the *Odyssey* and who are supposed to have the power of ravishing people with the sweetness of their strains till they died of starvation. The mermaids also were fabulous creatures—beautiful women from the waist upwards and fishes from the waist downwards—who were supposed to possess similar powers of destruction over human beings. It is to be noticed however that *mermaids* are not mentioned in classical mythology but appear only in the folk lore of Scandinavian literature.)

48. *Spread o'er ..... to die*—N.B. The whole passage can be thus explained: Spread your glorious wealth of hair upon the silver waves of the sea and I shall be content to take it as my bed and there to lie. No doubt, it will be courting sure death to lie upon the waves of the sea with your hair as bed, but I shall comfort myself with the thought that this death is the summit of glory; also I shall think that if you can die, Love itself may die for all that I care.

50. *In that glorious supposition*—in the fancy that I am lying upon your hair.

51. *Such means to die*—viz. the means of lying upon your hair for my bed.

52. *Let love.....sink*—N. B. The passage is certainly, obscure, and its obscurity is increased by the pun in *light* meaning (1) inconstant, as well as (2) light of weight. We can explain it thus:

'Love is light (inconstant), and light things are difficult to sink. But if she (love) sinks (contrary to her nature) then let her be drowned altogether.'—Of course, this is not very satisfactory, for it means 'if love sinks, let her be drowned' which is mere tautology. But its full implication may be thus brought out: 'If love sinks (if I am to be unsuccessful in my quest of love); then let life and love, both be drowned altogether.'

It will be seen that I have taken 'she' as agreeing with 'love.' It may also be taken as referring to Luciana; but then the meaning will be just nonsense.

53. *That you reason so*—that you talk in this fashion.

54. *Mated*—confounded, stupefied. But perhaps there is reference also to the second significance of *mated*, i.e. furnished with a mate, furnished with a companion.

55. *It is a fault...eye*—Expl. If you have been mated, (confounded), the fault springs from the lust of your eyes.

56. *For gazing...being by*—because my eyes have been dazzled by looking upon your sun-like beauty.

57. *Gaze where...sight*—The idea is this: 'Well, that fault can be easily cured : gaze upon your wife instead of upon me and then your eyes will be dazzled no longer.'

*Where you should*—where you ought to, viz. upon your wife.

58. *As good...night*—Expl. But one may as well shut his eyes as look upon your sister seeing that she is ugly like the night.

*Look on night*—i.e. look upon a person as ugly as the night.

63. *Mine own...part*—my better half as one should say now.

64. *Mine eye's clear eye*—you who are the light of my eyes.

66. *My sole earth's, heaven*—you who are my one object of joy and delight in this world.

*My heaven's claim*—you upon whom I base all my claim of attaining heaven.

63. *All this*—viz. all the complimentary epithets which you apply to me.

*All this...should be*—All these pretty epithets are rightfully my sister's due.

68. *I aim thee*—You are the object of all these epithets; you are the person aimed at by me in bestowing these epithets.

*Call thyself sister...I am thee*—If you say that your sister deserves these epithets, then I must say that you yourself are your sister.

71. *Give me thy hand*—Perhaps it means, marry me ; or perhaps it simply means 'let me clasp thy hand.'

72. *Soft sir*—i.e. do not proceed so quickly ; do not be so rash in proposing marriage to me.

73. *To get her—to propitiate her.*

75. *Your man—your servant.*

77. *I am a woman's man*—N. B. Note the quibble upon 'your man' and 'woman's man.'—'Man' in the first case, would mean servant; in the second case, husband. [I can't be your man, because I am claimed as a man (husband) by a woman; and seeing that I am claimed by a woman, I am beside myself *i.e.* I am not my own master.]

79. *Besides myself.....woman*—N. B. Dromio S. makes his point thus:—'A woman claims me as her husband. Therefore I am due first to her, I am her property; and consequently I am not my own master. And not being my own master, I am beside myself.'

80. *One that haunts me*—one that dogs my footsteps; one who will not let me be.

82-83. *Such claim.....horse*—viz. the claim of absolute ownership.

83. *As she would have me.....beast*—For fuller explanation see Paraphrase. (If I had been beast-like in appearance she would not have cared for me; but having got me, she will use as a very beast.)

84. *A very reverend body*—implying that the servant-maid was well-stricken in years.

89. *Without he say*—unless he calls her.

88-90. *I have but lean luck...marriage*—N. B. Notice the quibble upon *lean* and *fat*. 'No. doubt she is fat; and so if I marry her I shall have a fat wife. But all the same she is so ugly that, if I marry her, my luck in marriage must be very lean, *i. e.* very poor'

92. *She's the kitchen wench etc.*—Notice the humorous fancy which leads Dromio to connect the kitchen-maid with fat. Of course one has to do much with fat in the kitchen; and hence Dromio argues that a kitchenmaid having so much to do with fat must herself be fat.

93-94. *I know not.....light*—Expl. The only use that one can make of her is to put her on fire and to run away from her when she begins to burn. (Of course the reference is to the fact that fat burns very easily.)

95. *Will burn a Poland winter*—will burn as long as a severe Poland winter may last.

96. *Doomsday*—The day of last judgment, when according to Christian belief, the world will be shrivelled up in fire.

96-97. *She'll burn.....whole world*—The whole world will burn on the day of last judgment; but she will take a week longer to burn than the rest of the world.

99. *Swart*—black : burnt brown.

100. *Go over shoes*—i.e. sink up to his ankles.

101. *In the grime of it*—in the thick coating of filth that covers her body.

102. *Water will mend*—i.e. can be washed out by water.

103. *'Tis in grain*—Her dirt is not superficial; it can't be washed out by water; it is constitutional; it has sunk into the very bones of her body.

103. *Could not do it*—i.e. could not wash out the dirt of her body.

103. *Noah's flood.....do it*—Even the deluge which overwhelmed the whole world would be powerless to cleanse the filth from her body.

104. *Name*—Notice the pun upon the words *Vell* and *an ell*.

109. *No longer.....hip to hip*—In other words, her breadth is greater than her height.

110. *Like a globe*—Note again the pun upon the word globe, meaning (1) globular, spherical; (2) like a terrestrial globe, such as is used in schools.

110-11. *I could find...in her*—Dromio's point is this: As one can find out countries and continents in the terrestrial globe so I can find out countries and continents in her body.

112. *In what part...Ireland*—N.B. The dialogue that now ensues is in a coarse and vulgar strain and has presumably been omitted from the University text.

119. *Armed and reverted, etc* The point of the comparison can be thus given: Her forehead is armed, i.e. with warts and carbuncles; and it makes war against her hair seeing that her hair retreats from her forehead and grows

high upon the head. Similarly, France is armed i.e. up in arms, and is making war against her heir i.e. Henry IV, legitimate claimant to the throne.

*Reverted*—Properly speaking; it was the hair which was reverted and not the forehead.

122. *I looked for the chalky cliffs*—The chalk-cliffs of Dover form a distinctive feature of the English coast. Now chalk-cliffs are white; and so Dromio sought in the first instance to identify England by something white on the person of the kitchen wench. However there was nothing white in her body; and so he had to give up this attempt and to identify England with reference to the position of France.

124. *By the salt rheum*—N.B. Dromio makes his point thus:—Between England and France there is the salt sea; and hence, judging by the salt rheum running between her forehead and her chin Dromio gathers that England is in the kitchen maid's chin.

126. *Hot*—stinking, nasty.

129-30. *Declining.....Spain*—bending down towards her mouth. (Evidently the kitchen-wench had a long and drooping nose.)

131. *Armadoes of carraks*—fleets of vessels.

*Ballast*—ballasted, loaded.

130-31. *Who sent.....at her nose*—N. B. Of course, literally we can understand that Spain should send a whole armada of vessels to be loaded with precious stones in the West Indies; but how is it to be applied in the case of the kitchen-girl? What is the freight from the nose with which the vessel of her mouth is to be loaded? Or does it refer to the salt rheum dropping, not simply from her eyes but from her nose?

135-36. *privy marks*—secret marks of the body.

138. *Amazed*—not in the present sense of astonished, but in the stronger original sense of confounded, taken aback.

139. *If my breast.....flint*—if I had not been quite hard-hearted.

140. *Curtal dog*—a tailless dog; rather a dog with a blunt, stumpy tail.

140. *Turn i' the wheel*—i.e. turn the roasting spit in the kitchen.

141. *Post*—hurriedly, quickly.

142. *If the wind.....shore*—whichever quarter the wind may blow from.

142-43. *As if the wind.....to-night*—**Expl.** I do not know where I may go ; but any way I am determined not to stay any longer.

144. *If any bark*—whatever its destination may be.

147. *To pack*—i.e. to collect one's baggage.

151. *That.....hence*—i.e. I should go away from this place.

152-53. *Even my soul.....abhor*—I detest her from my very heart.

154. *Such.....grace*—of such an attractive beauty and excellent wit.

156. *Traitor to myself*—i.e. false to my own resolve and inclination.

*Hath almost.....myself*—**Expl.** I have resolved to go away from this place ; but the beauty of her sister almost makes me false to my resolution.

157. *Lest myself.....self-wrong*—lest I be tempted to commit some act of sin.

*To self-wrong*—an act of sin which will be a treachery to my higher self.

158. *I'll stop...song*—I will be deaf to her blandishments.

*The mermaid's song*—the enchantments of this woman.

159. *Must Antipholus etc*—**N.B.** The Student will notice that a new chapter of errors begins from here.

162. *Taken you*—carried to you.

163. *Made me...long*—detained me for such a time

166. *Bespoke it not*—did not order it.

172. *For fear...money more*—referring to the fact that he was preparing to depart even now. But of course the goldsmith who takes him as Ant. E. thinks that this is another pleasant jest on his part.



173. *You are a merry man*—You are pleased to be very facetious.

176. *That would...chain*—who would refuse such a beautiful chain when it is pressed upon him.

177. *Needs not...shifts*—needs not to exercise his wit for the purpose of earning his living.

180. *Put out*—i.e. sail from the harbour to-day.

## ACT IV.

### SCENE 1.

[A fresh complication of the plot now ensues. Hitherto Ant. S. has been mistaken for his brother, but converse series of errors begins from here, and it is now the turn of Ant. E. to be mistaken for the younger of the twins. The first error is rather unfortunate, for it leads Ant. E. to be arrested by an officer of the jail.]

1. *Pentecost*—Properly a Jewish festival which was afterwards transformed into a Christian holiday under the name of Whitsuntide. Whit Sunday is the 7th Sunday after Easter and is thus a movable festival; but evidently Shakespeare uses it here as a Term day; and as a matter of fact, Whit Sunday (May 15th) is a Term day in Scotland i.e. a day when payments are made, rents received etc.

1. *Since Pentecost...due*—though your debt has accrued since Pentecost last. (Evidently Pentecost or Whit Sunday had been agreed upon as the day of payment; but the goldsmith had made default and hence this reminder.)

2. *Have not much importuned you*—have not put any pressure upon you.

3-4 *Bound to Persia*—bound upon a voyage for Persia.

4. *Guilders*—simply in the sense of money. (See I.i.8.)

*Make...satisfaction*—Pay the debt at once.

6. *I'll attach you*—will have you arrested.

7. *Just the sum...to you*—the precise amount for which I am indebted to you.

8. *Growing to me*—due to me.

9. *In the instant...with you*—almost the very moment I met you.

10. *Had of me*—received from me.

*Five o'clock*—This is interesting as indicating the hour of supper in the age of Elizabeth.

12. *Pleaseth you walk with me etc.*—If you are pleased to walk with me.

14. *That labour*—the labour of walking to his house.

16. *A rope's end*—meaning a stout length of rope.

16-17. *That will I bestow...confederates*—In other words, I will scourge them with this rope.

21. *Buy a thousand...a rope*—another apparently obscure sentence. But the meaning can be thus given: 'The task of buying a rope's end for beating these impudent people seems as welcome to me as the task of purchasing an annuity of a thousand pounds. I would buy it as gladly as I would buy a thousand pounds a year.'

22. *A man is well help up*—N.B. Notice how Ant. E. and the goldsmith begin at once to talk at cross purposes. Ant. E. takes the goldsmith to task for his neglect in bringing the chain at supper time while the goldsmith, who imagines that he has given the chain to the other, thinks that Ant. E. is only having jest at his expense.

*We'll help up*—well helped; well served.

*A man is well...trusts to you*—A man who places trust in you certainly fares very ill, meaning that he is sure to be disappointed.

23. *I promised*—viz to the girl that I visited.

25. *Belike you thought*—N.B. Notice the coarseness of the jest. 'Perhaps you thought that if you brought this chain it would tie us together and thus prolong our love and delay your payment; and so to help yourself you refrained from bringing the chain altogether.' *If it were chain'd together*—if we were linked together, viz. by means of your chain.

27. *Saving your merry humour*—thanking you for your jest.

28. *Carat*—a unit of weight for the purpose of weighing diamonds, gold and other precious metals.

29. *Chargeful*—expensive.

27. *Here's the note etc.*—Expl. Here is an exact account of the weight of the chain, the fineness of the gold, and

the expense of making it up ; and you will find from this that the total charge amounts to just three ducats more than the sum which I stand indebted to this merchant.

32. *Discharged*—cleared in full.

34. *I am not.. money*—i.e. I have not got the money with me.

40. *Then you will bring the chain etc.*—The goldsmith and Ant. E. still fail to understand each other: the goldsmith thinks that the chain is with the citizen while the citizen thinks that the chain is with Angelo.

46. *Both wind gentleman*—Both wind and tide are ready for the voyage ; and the merchant is delayed only on account of this payment.

48. *Use this dalliance*—keep up this practical joke.

49. *Your breach .Porpentine*—your failure to take the chain to the Inn.

50. *Chid you*—taxed you ; taken you to task.

51. *Shrew*—a practised scold.

52. *The hour*—viz. the hour of departure. *Steals on*—draws near. *Despatch*—make haste, viz. to pay your debt.

53. *Importunes me*—presses me.

*How he importunes me*—how he presses me for payment.

56. *Send the chain .token*—i.e. send some token through me ; send me with some sign or symbol which will prove that I am entitled to receive it.

57. *You run...breath*—You pursue this jest to death ; you make too much of it. (The idea is this: A jest like this is well enough for a time ; but it grows very disagreeable if you persist in it long.)

59. *Dalliance*—here meaning delay ; or perhaps there is a reference to the chaffing or badinage in which the two friends seemed to be indulging.

*My business.... dalliance*—Expl. My business is too urgent, I can't put up with all this delay—I can't

afford to wait while you are exchanging jests between yourselves.

60. *Answer me*—satisfy my debt.

• *Good sir etc*—Apparently this remark is addressed to Antipholus and gives great offence to the latter.

61. *Leave him.....officer*—Leave him to the custody of the officer.

65. *You wrong me much*—you do injury to my credit.

68. *How it stands.....credit*—how it affects my reputation as a man of business.

69. *At my suit*—upon my complaint.

70. *Charge you*—command you.

71. *Touches.....reputation*—affects my credit.

73. *Or I attach you*—N. B. Angelo has been arrested on the suit of the merchant; and now he, in his turn, threatens Antipholus with a similar arrest. [Mr. Scrimgeour remarks that the goldsmith gets Antipholus arrested in his stead and led away to prison.—The suggestion, besides being unwarranted, is inherently improbable. Antipholus's arrest could not possibly satisfy the goldsmith's debt to the merchant and thus save Angelo from arrest; and in point of fact we find that both Antipholus and the goldsmith were led away to prison. No doubt the goldsmith reappears as a free man in the beginning of Act V.; but this must be because, in the meantime he had found some means of satisfying his debt.]

74. *Pay thee.....had*—pay you for something that I never received.

76. *Thy fee*—Apparently, it was customary to pay a small fee before a defaulting debtor could be put into prison. N. B. The student will notice that as yet there is no regular suit either against Angelo or against Ant. E.; and the arrest of both was evidently by means of some summary process under which defaulting debtors could be arrested even before judgment was passed against them.

80. *Till I give thee bail*—till I produce some person who can stand surety for me and thus procure my release.

81. *This sport*—viz. the pleasure of sending me to jail.

*But, sirrah.....as dear*—Expl. You will have to pay a heavy price for this pastime of yours, viz. the pleasure which you derive from sending me carelessly to jail.

82. *All the metal etc.*—all the gold and silver that you possess.

*As all the metal.....answer*—You will have to forfeit all the gold and silver in your shop when you are called upon to answer this high-handed proceeding of yours.

83. *Shall have law in Ephesus*—i. e. have judgment against you if there is any law in Ephesus.

*Enter Dromio of Syracuse*—The student will remember that at the end of III. ii., this Dromio had been sent by his master to hire passage in a ship. Having finished his business, he now returns to give information to his master and naturally mistakes the citizen Ant. for his younger brother; and a fresh series of confusion is thus opened.

85. *A bark of Epidamnium*—a vessel bound for Epidamnium.

87. *Bears away*—sails from the harbour. *Fraughtage*—luggage

89. *Balsamum*—The more usual form of the word is balsam, meaning a precious unguent.

*Aqua-vitæ*—liquor, strong water.

*The oil, the balsamum*—Evidently Ant. S. while searching for his brother was not unmindful of the interest of commerce.

90. *Merry wind*—favourable wind.

91. *They stay for nought at all*—There is absolutely nothing to prevent them from sailing at once.

93. *Peevish*—here meaning foolish.

95. *To hire waftage*—to book a passage for you.

97. *To what purpose*—viz., the object for which the rope was intended.

98. *You sent me.....as soon*—N. B. This is Dromio's emphatic way of denying the charge. What he means to say is this: 'You never sent me for a rope. Nay, rather than send me for a rope you would as soon have sent me to be hanged.'

101. *Teach your ears*—viz., by boxing them soundly.

102. *Hie thee straight*—go immediately.

104. *Tapestry*—ornamental hangings for the wall.

107. *That shall bail me*—The money found in the purse will be sufficient to procure my release.

110. *Dowsabel*—Of course this was not the name of the kitchen maid; but Dowsabel was a common servant's name and hence is used by Dromio here. (The word 'Dowsabel' properly meant a 'fair lass' and therefore is perhaps ironically applied to the kitchen-girl.)

111. *To compass*—to embrace.

113. *Must their... ..fulfil*—must carry out their master's commands.

## SCENE II.

[ A scene chiefly noticeable for the avalanche of epithets which Dromio S. pours out in describing the officer of the Counter—All sorts of inferences have been sought to be drawn from this scene concerning Shakespeare's knowledge of law; but to me the only justifiable inference seems to be that Shakespeare—like lesser men before and since—had once tasted the sweets of prison-life ]

2. *Austerely*—by close inspection,

3. *That he did plead etc.*—The idea is this: Are you quite sure that he was in earnest? or was he simply jesting with you?

4. *Looked he red or pale*—Apparently this rapid change of complexion would indicate that he was in earnest and very much in love, whereas a more tranquil demeanour would go to show that he was merely trifling.

6. *His heart's meteors etc.*—those passing shadows on the face which are a clear indication of the heart's inmost feelings. (*Meteors* would usually mean 'shooting stars.' But evidently Shakespeare uses the word in the sense of those heavily charged storm-clouds which gather on the sky and seem marshalled as if for battle.)

*Tilting*—careering; marshalling for battle.

*What observation.....in his face*—N. B. Divested of metaphor, the passage can be thus explained: What notice did you take of those shifting clouds of emotion which, passing upon the face, look like storm-clouds arrayed for battle?

7. *He denied.....right*—The double negative is for the sake of emphasis. 'He denied that you had any right in him.'

8. *He meant.....none*—Expl. When he said that I had no right in him, evidently he meant that *he* was not doing the right thing by *me*. (Mark the play upon the word 'right'.)

*My spite*—my evil fortune.

9. *A stranger here*—meaning a stranger at Ephesus. (But Adriana deliberately misunderstands the meaning and takes 'here' as meaning 'in this house'.)

10. *Though yet.....he were*—though he might be quite false and treacherous in other respects.

*And true he swore.....were*—He may be a very false man in other respects; but in saying that he was a stranger here he was only speaking the truth.

11. *For you*—in your favour.

14. *With what persuasion...love*—What temptation did he hold out to you in seeking and winning your love?

15. *That in an honest suit...move*—that might have been used if his suit were an honest one. (The idea is this: He was acting dishonestly in making love to me; but all the same the words he used might also have been used if his suit had been an honest one.)

17. *Durst speak him fair*—N. B. Mark how Adriana's jealousy flares out even in speaking to her younger sister. 'No doubt he was very kind to you; but were you equally kind to him in return?'

20. *My tongue etc.*—EXPL. My wish may not be gratified; but I am determined to abuse my husband to my heart's content though I may not succeed in winning his love.

21. *Crooked*—bent, distorted in limb.

*Sore*—withered, dried up. *Ill-faced, worse-bodied*—with an ugly face and an uglier body.

24. *Stigmatical*—bearing the stigma of viciousness upon his body; stigmatised or branded as with the very stamp of vice.

*Stigmatical...mind*—His body bears the stamp of vice, and his mind is even more vicious still.

25. *Who would be jealous.....one*—Luciana, in spite of her love for her sister, can't help making fun of her. She says—'Suppose your husband is as bad as you make him out to be, why should you be jealous of him?'

26. *Wail'd*—lamented, mourned for.

*Gone*—lost.

*No evil.....gone*—No one mourns for the loss of an evil thing.

27. *„But I think.....I say*—Though I paint him in such evil colours I think better of him at heart.

28. *Yet would*—yet I wish.

*Herein*—i. e. so far as my husband is concerned.

*Yet.....worse*—Expl. I wish that in the eyes of other people my husband may appear even worse than my description makes him out to be.

29. *The lapwing*—also called the peewit The reference is to the bird's habit of crying (uttering its notes) farthest from its nest in order to mislead the fowlers and thus preserve its young ones from harm.

25. *Far from the nest.....cries away*—N. B. Adriana applies the idea thus : The lapwing cries farthest from its nest in order to mislead the hunters and thus preserve its young ones. And so I speak ill of my husband in order that other women may think ill of him and thus I may have him wholly to myself.

36. *In Tarter limbo*—meaning in prison. (N. B. Properly speaking Tartar limbo is a tautology—Tartar or Tartarus meaning hell, while *limbo* or *limbus patrum* would mean that region on the border of hell which was supposed to be inhabited by the souls of children who had died before baptism and of virtuous people who had died before the time of Christ.—In any case, Tartar limbo would mean a place terrible like hell and was applied to a prison in the cant phrase of the day.

37. *In an everlasting garment*—referring to the suit of buff in which the sergeant of the prison was dressed. (The sergeant was dressed in a suit of leather and leather wears for a very long time. And hence it is described as an everlasting garment.)

38. *Hath him*—has caught him. (The expression 'hath him by the heel' is derived from the custom of punishing people by putting them in the stocks.)

38- *On whose.....steel*—Dromio's idea is that the steel buttons on the sergeant's coat were an index of the hardness of his heart.



41. *A back-friend*—A play upon the double sense of the word—(1) an enemy; (2) a man who comes and catches you from behind.

*Shoulder-clapper*—referring to the fact that tapping one on the shoulder was the mark of his being arrested.

42. *Creek*—Properly a narrow channel of water; here referring to any winding and crooked passage.

*Alleys*—narrow lanes or pathways.

41-42. *One that countermands.....narrow lands*—one that prevents people from escaping by the narrow and tortuous byways of the city.

43. *A hound.....dry-foot well*—N. B. Both expressions are derived from the language of the chase. A hound that runs counter is a hound that has lost its quarry and runs back upon its traces, while the hound that 'draws dry-foot' is a hound that can follow its quarry by the scent even on dry ground. The second expression therefore would be inconsistent with the first, and Dromio is only punning upon the former phrase. (The Counter was the name of one of the principal prisons in London; and by running counter, he means, 'keeping the Counter prison, 'being one of the keepers of prison.'

44. *One that before the judgment.....hell*—referring to the summary process by which people could be sent to prison even before the institution of a regular suit. The idea is this: People are sent to hell only after the day of last judgment; but it is different with the warders of the counter. They send people to Hell (take people to jail) even before judgment has been passed against them.

45. *What is the matter*—Evidently Adriana has been puzzled by the niagara of epithets that 'Dromio hurls at her head.

46. *I do not know...case*—Expl. I do not know what the charge against him may be; but this I know that he has been arrested in a spit.

48. *I know not at whose suit etc.*—Mark again the play upon the two senses of the word 'suit'. At l. 44 'suit' means complaint while in the next sentence it means dress.

50. *Redemption*—means of procuring his release.

54. *Not on a band etc.*—N. B. Adriana uses band in the sense of bond—meaning a mortgage-bond, while Dromio wilfully misunderstands the word as meaning ‘bond’ or rope.

58. *It was two.....strikes one*—This is of course sheer foolery. By this ludicrous assumption of terror Dromio wants to make out as if everything in this strange city was bewitched. Even the clocks were bewitched for they seemed to be running backwards.

60. *If an hour meet a sergeant etc.*—Note the excesses of veneration or awe in which Dromio holds the police sergeant. ‘No doubt time does not ordinarily run back, but even time would run back if a sergeant were to arrest it.’

61. *As if Time were in debt*—Adriana is very literal and prosaic. She remonstrates thus with Dromio: ‘You speak of a sergeant going to arrest Time; but can Time be indebted that it should run the risk of arrest?’

*Were in debt*—could possibly be indebted. *Fondly*—foolishly.

62. *Time is a very....season*—N. B. Dromio makes his point thus: ‘Time certainly can be indebted: nay, it is even bankrupt—for it can never satisfy the debt which it owes and bears.’ The idea can be thus amplified: “We make all sorts of expectations from Time: but these expectations can never be all fulfilled; and therefore, so far as our hopes and unfulfilled aspirations are concerned, Time must be always in our debt.”

64. *Stealing on*—creeping slowly on.

69. *Pressed down*—overwhelmed, weighed down.

*With conceit*—with all sorts of fanciful ideas.

69-70. *Conceit.....injury*—Expl. Being deprived of my husband’s company, my ideas are my only consolation; but they are also a source of injury to me for sometimes they fill my mind with causeless fears.

### SCENE III.

[The comedy is thickening apace. As we have said before, in the previous act it was Ant. E. who was being mistaken for Ant. S. while now it is for the latter to be mistaken for the former.—Thus here, after some excellent jesting between Ant. S. and Dromio, S. we have the courteous

mistaking the former for his brother and getting rebuffed in consequence. But the courtesan is not a person to be easily rebuffed; and so she improvises a lie and carries it in all haste to Adriana.]

2. *Their well-acquainted friend*—a friend of long standing

4. *Tender money to me*—press offers of money upon me.

5. *Kindnesses*—past acts of kindness shown by me to them.

9. *Took measure of my body*—measured me for a suit of clothes.

10. *Imaginary wiles*—tricks of sorcerers.

11. *Lapland sorcerers*—Lapland, according to the people of the Elizabethan period, was the land per excellence of sorcery and witchcraft.

13. *Have you got.....apparelled*—Have you succeeded in shaking off the sergeant? **N. B.** The point of Dromio's comparison between the sergeant and Adam new apparelled may be thus given: Adam of course was naked; dressed in his own skin; the sergeant also was dressed in skin; and therefore he is described as the picture of old Adam dressed up in a new suit of clothes.

16-17. *That goes...Prodigal*—The reference is to the Biblical parable of the prodigal who returned to his father's house after long wanderings and in whose honour the fatted calf was killed. [Of course, there is an oblique reference to the fact that it was only prodigals (spendthrift persons) who found their way to a debtors' prison.]

*That goes.....Prodigal*—The sergeant was dressed in leather—in a suit of calf-skin; and Dromio says that it was the skin of the identical calf that must have been killed in honour of the prodigal's return.

20. *It's a plain case*—My meaning is plain enough.

21. *Base-viol*—a musical instrument, something like the violin.

22. *Gives them a bob and 'rests them*—i. e. taps them on the shoulder and arrests them. There is a pun upon the secondary sense of the passage according to which it would mean—'Gives them a bob (a shilling) and thus allows them respite.' (Of course, it was only poor broken-down persons who got arrested and sent to jail. And Dromio, referring to the

practice of arrest by giving a tap on the shoulder, puns upon the word and says 'the sergeant takes pity upon poor broken-down people, gives them a bob, i. e. a shilling and so allows them to rest.')

23-24. *Takes pity.....durance*—The same idea is further developed. Dromio playfully suggests that the sergeant who arrests poor debtors only takes pity upon them and gives them suits of durance in place of their own ragged garments.

*Gives them...durance*—Note the pun: (1) puts them in jail—sends them to durance vile; (2) furnishes them with suits of durance, i.e. leather garments which will last for a long time.

24. *Sets up his rest*—is resolved.

24-25. *Sets up his rest...morris-pike*—Dromio means that the truncheon of the jailor is more useful than the morris-pike of the soldier.

27. *Sergeant of the band*—Note again the pun upon the word 'band'—(1) troop, company; (2) mortgage bond.

28. *Breaks his band*—fails to discharge his mortgage deed.

30. *Good rest*—again punning upon the words 'rest' and 'arrest' "These sergeants are always 'resting' people as if they thought that men always want to rest, are always inclined to sleep."

31. *Rest in your foolery*—Mark how the pun upon the word 'rest' is run to death. First of all we have the play upon *rest* (repose) and *rest* (arrest). And here we have the further pun upon 'rest' as meaning stop, cease.

32. *Puts forth*—sails out from the harbour.

33. *I brought you word etc.*—As matter of fact, he had brought the information not to Ant. S. but to Ant. E.

35. *Hoy*—a lumbering sort of coasting vessel.

35. *Were you hindered by the sergeant.....Delay...Expl.* I hired for you a passage in the vessel. Expedition (the name of a boat); but, apparently the sergeant forced you to wait for the bark Delay. (Of course there was no such bark as that, and Dromio is only punning upon the words Expedition and Delay.)

37. *Distract*—mad, confounded.

38. *Wander in illusions*—roam about in a region of fancy.

41. *I see.....now*—viz. from the chain which you are wearing round your neck.

43. *Avoid*—get away.

46. *The devil's dam*—she-devil, the wife of the devil ; of course alluding to the fact that she was a woman.

47. *In the habit.....wench*—dressed like a loose woman.

47. *Light wench*—a woman of easy virtue, a courtesan.

48. *Thereof.. say...* This is the reason why the girls say etc. *Thereof comes.....wench...* N. B. Dromio's meaning can be thus expressed : When the wenches say 'god dam (n) me they mean that God should make them the devil's dam, i.e. that God should make loose women of them. In other words, these girls want to grow wanton and therefore say 'God damn me.'

50. *They*—i.e. these light women.

50. *Angels of light*—apparitions of radiance and beauty.

51. *Will burn*—i.e. in hell fire. (Perhaps it means also that they will burn those who may come in contact with them.)

52. *Come not near her*—for her contagion will burn people.

53. *Marvellous merry*—pleased to be very facetious.

54. *Mend our dinner*—have some further refreshment.

55. *If you do*—i.e. if you accompany her for the purpose of taking refreshment.

55. *Spoon-meat*—such meat as requires to be eaten with a spoon.

55. *Bespeak*—order.

*Expect spoon meat etc.*—alluding to the common proverb (quoted two lines below) that he who sups with the devil must have a long spoon.

61. *Give me the ring etc.*—Notice how practical the courtesan is. Failing to get the chain, she must at least have the ring with which she parted in anticipation of the chain.

62. *My diamond*—viz. the diamond ring that I gave you at dinner.

64. *Ask but the parings etc.*—i.e. are content with trifles.

65. *Rush*—a piece of straw.

67. *She*—referring to the courtesan.

71. *To cheat me so*—viz. by having my ring and yet refusing to give me the chain.

73. *Fly pride etc.*—N. B. Dromio applies the proverb in this way : The peacock is the proudest of birds ; and therefore it would be absurd for it to cry shame upon pride. Similarly, for the courtesan who was accustomed to cheat people, it was absurd to charge Antipholus with cheating.

*Fly pride etc.*—Expl. It is as absurd for a peacock to cry shame upon pride as it is for you to charge my master with cheating.

75. *Demean himself*—conduct himself. (Also with a side glance at the meanness of his conduct.)

77. *For the same*—in return for this ring.

80. *Instance*—proof, indication.

*Rage*—madness, insanity.

81. *A mad tale*—a foolish, cock-and-bull story.

83. *His fits*—his occasional attacks of madness.

84. *On purpose*—deliberately.

85. *My way*—the course I should adopt.

86. *Brings lunatic*—i.e. in a raging fit of madness.

88. *I fittest choose*—I choose as the fittest course for me to follow.

89. *Too much to lose*—I cannot afford to lose such a large sum.

#### SCENE IV.

[Events multiply fast, and we seem to be hurrying towards the climax of the comedy—Antipholus E has already suffered the humiliation of being arrested and placed in custody ; but as if this were not enough, he is now treated as a mad man and placed in the hands of a mad-doctor named Pinch.]

1. *Break away*—run away from your custody.

3. *To warrant thee*—to satisfy you ; to serve as my security with you and thus procure my release.

4. *Wayward*—obstinate, capricious.

5. *Will not.....messenger*—perhaps is making some difficulty about entrusting the messenger with such a large sum of money.

6. *Attach'd*—arrested

7. *Will sound... ears*—she will not like it at all

9. *Have you that I sent for*—Notice how the ambiguous form of the question heightens the confusion still further. Antipholus means 'have you got the money I sent you for?' But Dromio naturally misunderstands the question and thinks that his master is asking about the rope which he had commissioned him to buy.

10 *I warrant you*—I can assure you.

10 *Will pay them all*—**N.B.** Notice again how the ambiguity of the answer keeps up the mistake as between the master and man. (In speaking of paying, Dromio is thinking of requiting his mistress and others for the wrongs which they had inflicted upon him and his master, while Antipholus naturally takes the word in the natural sense of payment in money.)

14. *I will serve.....rate*—**Expl** If 500 ducats be the price of one rope, I should be quite willing to purchase for you 500 ropes at that rate

19 *'Tis for me to be patient*—Addressing the officer Dromio says "why do you ask my master to be patient?" It is rather for me to be patient seeing that I am being cudgelled unjustly."

19. *I am in adversity*—It is I who am suffering and therefore am in need of patience

21 *Persuade him... hands*—**Expl** You ask me to hold my tongue, but it would be more to the purpose if you ask my master to hold his hands

22. *Whoreson*—bastard

23. *Senseless*—Notice the pun upon the word. By senseless, Antipholus means foolish, while Dromio means 'without the power of feeling'

23. *I would I were.....blows*—**Expl** You call me senseless (stupid), but I wish that I were really senseless (bereft of the power of feeling) in order that I might not feel the smart of your blows.

27. *Nativity*—birth.

23. *When I am cold etc.*—In other words, he is never in want of an excuse for beating me. When I am cold, my coldness serves as an excuse, and when I am hot it is my heat that serves as his excuse.

30. *Raised*—i. e., made to stand up.

33. *Wont her brat*—is accustomed to carry her child.

36. *Respice finem*—N. B. The reference is to a standing jest of the time which consisted in a pun upon the expressions *respice finem*—*respice funem* and which would mean both—(1) have a care for your end, and (2) have a care that you are not hanged in the end.

37. *To prophesy like the parrot*—N. B. Parrots then as now were taught to utter foul and ominous expressions like 'beware of the rope' or 'walk the plank'—meaning that somebody was destined for an unfortunate end. Now, if any passer-by happened to be offended at these expressions, it was a common jest for the master of the parrot to say—'Take heed, sir, my parrot prophesies. Divested of these puns and references Dromio's meaning may be thus expressed: 'Mistress, have a good care of yourself; keep a good length from the master; beware that he does not lay about with his rope's end upon you'

*Re pice finem*—Lit. 'have a care for your end' Here, 'see that the rope's end doesn't touch you.'

*Like the parrot*—after the fashion of parrots.

37. *Beware...end* Of course, in the parrot's mouth, it would mean 'see that you aren't hanged.' Here it means, 'see that the master does not lay about with the rope's end.'

40. *Incivility*—viz., cruelty in beating the servant.

*Confirms no less*—proves as much.

41. *Conjurer*—a ghost doctor.

42. *Establish.....again*—restore him to his proper wits."

43. *Please...demand*—satisfy all your demands; pay you as much as you want."

44. *Fiery*—angry, infuriated:

45. *Ecstasy*—his fit of madness.



47. *There is my hand*—N. B. Note the quibble which is suggested by the expression 'feel your pulse' Ant. says 'here is my hand right enough ; but instead of feeling my pulse, you will have to feel my hand upon your ear.'

48. *I charge thee etc.*—N. B. Pinch has evidently called up his most solemn manner and is addressing, not Antipholus direct but the devil that was supposed to lodge in his body.

49. *To yield possession*—viz., to give up your possession of this man's body.

49. *To yield...prayers*—to yield to the influence of my prayers and give up possession of this man's body.

50. *Thy state of darkness*—the dark chamber of hell where you dwell.

52. *Thou doting wizard*—you foolish magic-monger.

54. *Minion*—This word has passed through a variety of senses and now means an unworthy favourite ; but here it means, a loose, unworthy woman.

54. *Your customers*—your clients ; your chosen companions.

55. *Saffron face*—yellow, bilious face.

56. *Revel and feast it*—'It', here is an instance of the dative of interest.

55-58. *Did this companion.....house*—In other words—"were these sorry and bilious knaves revelling and merry-making at my house while I--the legitimate owner--was kept shivering outside."

60. *Would.....time*—I wish that you had remained there till now.

61. *This open shame*—viz., the public indignity of being arrested in your native town and behaving like a mad man in the streets.

62. *Thou villain*—turning towards Dromio.

63. *Sooth to say*—to tell you the truth.

65. *Your doors were lock'd etc.*—N. B. Dromio is no doubt speaking the absolute truth ; but the way in which his answers are framed lend colour to the suspicion that he is simply echoing his master's words in order to pacify his spirit.

67. *Sans fable*—without fable ; i.e., to speak the truth.

*She herself*—she in her own person.

69. *Certes*—certainly.

69. *Kitchen vestal*—kitchen-maid. Mark the mock-serious pomposity of manner which Dromio here puts on and which lends colour to the suspicion that he was only trying to humour his master.

72. *The vigour of his rage*—the full burden of his anger.

73. *To soothe him*—to fall in with his humour.

73. *In these contraries*—in these whimsical moods of his mind.

73. *Is't good...contraries*—Adriana evidently supposes that Dromio is lying in order to keep his master in good humour ; and she doubts if this 'policy' is really good in view of her husband's condition.

74. *No shame*—no harm.

74. *Finds his vein*—knows his real character.

75. *Yielding to him*—i.e., by pretending to acquiesce in his sentiments.

75. *Humours...frenzy*—soothes him in his fit of madness.

76. *Suborn'd the goldsmith*—i.e., paid him money and thus instructed him to bear false witness against me.

79. *Heart and good will*—sympathy and good-feeling.

83. *I am witness with her*—I can bear testimony to the fact.

85. *I was sent for...rope*—Dromio's answer, though perfectly true, proves to be particularly unlucky—for both Antipholus and Adriana are now convinced that he is lying.

86. *Possess'd*—i. e., obsessed by ghosts.

87. *Deadly*—wild, disordered.

89. *Lock me forth*—shut me out.

94. *Dissembling*—false, hypocritical.

96. *Art confederate...pack*—have entered into a foul conspiracy with a gang of rascals.

*A damned pack*—an accursed band.

97. *To make...of me*—to make me a common object of ridicule.

99. *That would behold...sport*—would rejoice to contemplate this ludicrous plight of mine.

101. *More company*—Pinch calls out for the assistance of more people.

104. *I am thy prisoner*—and you are responsible for my safety.

105. *To make a rescue*—to snatch me away by force from your custody.

109. *Peevish*—foolish.

111. *Do outrage...to himself*—act in a way that is injurious to his own reputation. (Do you take any pleasure in seeing this man act foolishly and thus injure his own reputation?)

113. *The debt...required of me*—*Expl.* I shall be required to make good the sum for which he stands indebted.

114. *Discharge thee*—i. e. recoup you for any possible loss.

116. *How the debt grows*—how the debt has arisen; what was the occasion for borrowing this money.

117. *Safe conveyed*—escorted in safety.

120. *Enter'd in bond for you*—bound in chain for your sake. (For the pun, see Appendix).

A man is said to be 'entered in bond' for another when he stands surety for that other. But here Dromio uses the expression in a literal sense.

121. *Wherefore...mad me*—why do you goad me to the verge of madness?

122. *Will...for nothing*—without having given any cause.

*Be mad, good master*—For then at least you will have given them some excuse for binding you. (At present you are bound for nothing. But it is better that people should be bound for something rather than nothing; and therefore I ask that you should consent to be mad for the time being).

123. *Idly*—incoherently, foolishly.

129. *How grows it due*—How has the debt come to be incurred?

131. *Had it not*—did not receive it from the goldsmith.

132. *All in rage*—transported with a fury of madness.

134. *The ring I saw etc.*—Mark how the Courtezan will not lose sight of the main chance; she keeps harping upon the ring which she had presented to Antipholus and which she now expects to get back with the help of Adriana.

135. *Straight after*—almost immediately afterwards.

138. *At large*—in full detail.

140. *Naked swords*—swords unsheathed.

144. *Would be your wife*—claimed to be your wife.

144. *Ran from you*—evidently at sight of the naked sword.

147-48. *They will surely...harm*—because now we know that they are afraid of drawn swords.

148. *They speak us fair*—they speak courteously with us.

150. *The mountain of mad flesh*—referring to the fat kitchen wench who had claimed him for her husband.

151. *Stay here still*—continue to remain here.

151-52. *Turn witch*—i.e. turn sorcerer like the other people of this enchanted place. (Notice how the words 'wizard,' 'witch,' 'sorcerer' are used indifferently in the same sense, viz. of people proficient in the practice of the black arts.)

153. *For all the town*—i.e. for all the riches of the town.

154. *To get...aboard*—to carry our luggage on board the ship.

## ACT V.

### SCENE 1

[The very possibility of this Comedy depended upon the condition that the two Antipholuses should not come across each other; and so the whole business is at end—all the mystery and mistake is cleared up—as soon as the brothers are confronted with each other. Aegeon, as the father of the happy pair of twins, is of course spared his life,—and to crown all he discovers his lost wife in the abbeys of the priory.]

*Priory*—Shakespeare uses the word in the same sense as convent, i.e. a religious house for nuns.

1. *Hinder'd*—prevented you from going upon your voyage.

4. *Esteem'd*—thought of.

6. *Credit*—referring to a man's financial solvency.

8. *Word*—i.e., his mere word without any deed or writing.

*Might bear my wealth*—might persuade me to part with all my wealth.

9. *Yonder...he walks*—N.B. As a matter of fact, this was not Antipholus E, but Ant.S; and thus a fresh chapter of confusion here opens.

10. *That self chain*—that very chain.

11. *Forswore to have*—denied having received.

*Forswore most monstrously*—denied in a most shameless and impudent manner.

14. *This shame trouble*—referring to the shame of his arrest.

15. *Scandal*—disgrace.

16. *With circumstance*—i.e. with minute and circumstantial details.

16-17. *With circumstance...chain*—You denied having received the chain; and not simply that, you denied it upon oath and with circumstantial details.

18. *Charge*—the expense to which you have put me

20. *But for staying...controversy*—but for being delayed by our quarrel.

28. *Resort*—meet, gather together.

29. *Impeach me*—impeach my reputation.

30. *I'll prove*—viz. by fighting with you

31. *If thou dar'st stand*—i.e. if you venture to stand up against me in fair fight.

34. *Get within him*—A duelling phrase, meaning 'get within his guard' 'go past his posture of defence.'

36. *Take a house*—take refuge in some sanctuary—i.e. in some privileged place where you would be immune from arrest.

37. *Is some priory*—a convent of some sort.

„ *We are spail'd*—we, shall be quite undone.

42. *Not in his perfect wits*—not in the full possession of his senses.

43. *That I did...on him*—that I wanted to fight with him.

*I am sorry now*—i.e. now when I know that he is mad.

44. *This possession*—this attack of madness; this possession with a spirit of madness.

*Sour*—morose, sulky.

34. *Heavy*—melancholy, gloomy.

46. *Much...he was*—very different from his usual character.

47. *Till this afternoon...of rage*—In other words, his madness never openly broke out till to-day.

48. *Ne'er...of, rage*—never assumed this open and manifest form.

49. *Wrack of sea*—shipwreck at sea.

50-51. *Hath not else...love*—Expl. Has he been lured into the path of unholy love by the lust of the eye? In other words, has he been tempted into sin by the attraction of physical beauty?

51. *Stray'd his affection*—misplaced his affection. (Notice that this active use of the verb 'to stray' is unusual.)

53. *Who give...gazing*—who allow their eyes to rove about from woman to woman (and thus are easily ensnared in sin.)

57. *Reprehended him*—taken him to task.

*You should...reprehended*—N.B. Mark the Socratic irony of method which the lady Abbess here employs. Her object is to draw out Adriana and lead her on to confess her fault, viz. in having ill-treated her husband. Adriana is completely deceived by her sympathetic manner and her apparently innocent questions, and does not perceive till too late that she has been 'betrayed to her own reproof.'

59. *Not rough enough*—i.e. not as severely as you ought to have done.

60. *As my modesty would let me*—as would be consistent with decency.

61. *Haply in private*—N.B. The insinuation is that she ought to have done it in public in order to make the reproach effective ; and poor Adriana at once falls into the trap and confesses that she had been upbraiding her husband—not simply in the secrecy of the home but also in public places.

64. *The copy of our conference*—the sole theme of our discourse. *Conference*—conversation.

65. *For my urging it*—because I persisted in badgering him upon the subject.

66. *At board*—when seated at table for meals.

*In bed...urging it*—In other words, I would not let him be; I taxed him with it in bed, I taxed him with it at board, and in fact, I nagged him upon the subject everywhere.

68. *Glanced it*—hinted at it, referred to it.

69. *Still*—always.

70. *And thereof came it etc*—N.B. Mark how swiftly the lady Abbess now turns round upon poor Adriana and confronts her with her own confessions. *Thereof*—viz. because of this persistent nagging of yours.

71. *Venom*—in the sense of venomous, poisonous.

72. *Poisons...dog's tooth*—is more deadly than the bite of a rabid dog.

73. *Hindered*—broken, disturbed.

*Railing*—bitter and violent abuse.

74. *And thereof...light*—Expl Your nagging deprived him of sleep ; and his present light-heartedness is the effect of his sleeplessness.

75. *Sauced*—seasoned, accompanied.

76. *Unquiet meals...digestions*—If a man is interrupted in his meals, his power of digestion is upset.

77. *Thereof*—viz. from this ill digestion.

*Thereof...bred*—Your upbraidings disturbed him in his meals ; disturbed meals produce bad digestion ; and bad digestion produces fever.

79. *His sports*—the recreations in which he indulges:

80. *Sweet recreation barr'd*—when a man is deprived of the necessary refreshment after toil.

81. *Moody*—sour, gloomy.

82. *Kinsman.....despair*—the depression of spirits which is closely allied to grim and utter hopelessness.

83. *At her heels*—viz. closely following the spirit of depression and despair.

84. *Distemperatures*—disorders, diseases.

*Pale distemperatures...life*—sickly diseases which are the enemies of life.

83-84 *At her heels.....to life*—N. B. Adriana makes her point thus : When a man is deprived of necessary recreation, he falls into depression and melancholy ; depression brings despair ; and despair brings in its train a troop of evil and ghastly diseases.

85. *Life-preserving rest*—that repose and refreshment which is necessary to the maintenance of life.

86. *Mud*—i. e. madden.

*Man or beast*—either man or beast ; meaning both man and beast.

88. *Hath scqued thy husband...wits*—hath confounded your husband and driven him into madness.

89. *She never reprehended etc.*—N.B. See how Luciana takes up the cudgel on behalf of her sister ; but apparently Adriana herself has been overwhelmed by the avalanche of the lady Abbess's reproaches.

90. *When he demean'd...wildly*—when he behaved in a rude and boisterous manner.

91. *Why bear you etc.*—Why do you put up with this reproach ? (This is addressed to Adriana and not to the Abbess.)

92. *She did betray.....reproof*—She has led me on to confess things which are damaging to myself. (She has caught me in a trap : misled by her innocent manner, I have said things which are now being used against myself.)

96. *Sanctuary*—It will be noticed that in the middle ages, certain places, as for instance, churches, convents and monasteries as well as certain specified districts had



the privilege of sanctuary, i.e. people who took shelter in these places would be immune from arrest so long as they remained there.

97,99. *It shall privilege him.....assaying it*—till I have either succeeded or failed in my attempt to restore him to his senses.

99. *In assaying it*—in attempting the task, viz. of restoring his senses.

100. *I will attend my husband*—N.B. Students must not be misled into thinking that this is a proof of Adriana's extravagant affection for her husband : it is only a jealous woman's clamorous instance upon her own rights. Whether Adriana loves her husband or not she cannot bear that some one else should deprive her of her rights and take up her rightful place at her husband's side.)

101. *Diet his sickness*—i.e. give him nourishment during his sickness.

*It is my office*—it is my duty as wife.

102. *No attorney*—i.e. no proxy to work on my behalf.  
*Will have no attorney but myself*—I am not going to have my wife's work performed by a deputy.

104. *Be patient*—i.e. have done with your pious wishes

105. *The approved...have*—such means as I know.

106. *Syrups*—sweet and soothing drinks.

107. *Formal man*—a man in his normal and regular state of mind.

108. *Mine oath*—i.e. my oath as a member of the order of nuns to which I belong.

*As a branch and parcel of my oath*—The idea is this : To heal the sick and minister to their wants in suffering is a part of my duty as a nun.

109. *My order*—i. e. the religious order to which I belong. The monks and nuns of the middle ages were divided among various orders of religious houses, as for instance, the order of St. Benedict, the Cistercian order etc.

112. *Ill it doth.....holiness*—it does not agree with your holy character and position.

115. *This indignity*—this humiliation which the Abbess has put upon you, viz. in refusing to give back your husband to your care.

118. *Have now his grace*—have persuaded the Duke.

119. *Perforce*—by an employment of force.

120. *The dial points at five*—The hand of the clock is on the stroke of five. (Another interesting point of time as giving the hour of supper among the Elizabethans.)

122-24. *The melancholy vale...abbey here*—It has been conjectured that in the melancholy vale behind the ditches of Abbey, Shakespeare is thinking of Wapping, where formerly pirates and sea-rovers were hanged.

123. *Sorry execution*—shameful hanging.

126. *Reverend*—simply meaning aged, ancient—with no idea of clerical rank.

127. *Unluckily*—unfortunately for himself.

130. *We will behold his death*—We shall be present at his execution. Down to the middle of nineteenth century no spectacle was more welcome to the English people than the sight of hanging or a public execution.

134. *So much we tender him*—so much consideration do we show him; such tenderness do we exhibit on his account.

139. *Whom I made...I had*—whom I married and thus made the master of my property. (Under the ancient marriage law of England the husband became the sole owner of all the wife's property unless there was any special settlement to the contrary.)

140. *Important letters*—Perhaps *important* here convey the idea of 'importunate', urgent.

*This ill day*—this unlucky, ill-fated day.

142. *That*—so that.

144. *Doing.....citizen*—behaving offensively towards the citizens.

145. *Rushing in their houses etc.*—Of course the only foundation for this sweeping charge was the trumped-up story of the courtesan.

146. *Anything.....like*—anything which he fancied in his fit of madness.

147. *Once did...bound*—once I succeeded in securing him.  
 148. *To take order for the wrongs*—to arrive at a compromise with people about the injury which he had committed.

150. *What strong escape*—what violent means of escaping from his custody.

151. *That had the guard of him*—who were entrusted with charge of him.

153. *With ireful passion*—inspired with anger.

154. *Mudly bent on us*—driving against us with mad fury.

155. *Raising of more aid*—collecting more assistance.

*Raising of more aid*—N.B. The students who have carefully followed the story from beginning to end will notice how Adriana distorts the real facts of the case in order to make out a strong plea in her favour. Thus (1) Antipholus had not been rushing through the streets doing displeasure to the citizens; (2) she herself had not gone anywhere in order to take order for the alleged wrongs committed by her husband; (3) Antipholus and Dromio had not met them with mad passion and chased them away.

163. *Long since*—from a very long time.

164. *Engaged*—pledged.

*I to thee.....prince's word*—I gave you my word as a royal prince.

165. *When thou did'st make him etc.*—From this as well as the reference given in l. 139 one may be perfectly sure that Adriana was much older and richer person than Antipholus; and the match between them had been arranged by the Duke in order that the latter might be endowed with the wealth of the former.

166. *To do him all the grace and good*—to show him as much favour as I could.

169. *Determine*—settle this dispute.

170. *Shift*—i.e. look out for yourself.

172. *Beaten the maids a-row*—beaten them one after another; made them stand in a line as it were, and beat them from one end to the other.

173. *Singed off*—burned off.

174. *As it blazed*—as his beard continued to burn.

175. *Puddled mire*—muddy and filthy water.

176. *Ever as it blazed.....the hair*—They first set fire to his beard and then deluged him with mud and filth, under the pretext of quenching this fire.

177. *Nicks him like a fool*—tricks him out like a fool by clipping his hair irregularly.

178. *Present help*—immediate assistance.

180. *Are here*—meaning, within the Abbey.

181. *That is false etc.*—Of course Adriana is obsessed with the notion that her husband has taken shelter in the Abbey, and therefore cannot bring herself to believe in the servant's story.

183. *I have not breathed.....see it*—I have hardly paused to draw breath in my haste to bring the news to you.

185. *To scotch your face*—to hack and slash your face. (*To scotch* is to cut with incisions.)

187. *Halberds*—These were long wooden shafts surmounted with a double-headed blade shaped like an axe on one side and a hook on the other.

*Guard with halberds*—Evidently the Duke calls upon his guards to form a sort of ring round them and thus protect Adriana from any possible injury.

189. *He is borne.....invisible*—He must have been carried outside the Abbey in an invisible form. *Even now*—only recently.

191. *Past thought of human reason*—Antipholus's sudden appearance from outside the Abbey seems like a miracle to Adriana, and she thinks he must have effected his escape by means of art magic in an invisible form.

194. *Bestride thee*—i. e. stood over you with my legs across your body.

194. *Took deep scars*—took upon me the wounds that were meant for you.

194-95. *When I bestrid thee.....life*—when I saved your life by bestriding your body and taking upon myself the blows meant for you.

197. *The fear of death*—the fear of being presently hanged.

. *Unless.....do'te*—unless I have been driven quite mad by the fear of immediate death. . .

. *Unless the fear of death etc.*—Evidently this is spoken aside.

201. *Abused me*—used me ill.

201-202. *Ilath dishonoured me.....injury*—has inflicted upon me the extremity of possible injury and disgrace.

204. *Shameless*—publicly, impudently.

205. *Discover*—show, explain.

206. *Shut the doors upon me*—locked me out from the house.

207. *Harlots*—not in the present sense of prostitutes but in the sense of lewd, licentious people to whatever sex they may belong.

210-11. *So befall my soul.....withal*—**Expl.** May I fare in the other world according as this story is true or false !

211. *This is...withal*—this charge which he brings against me.

212. *Ne'er may I look on day etc.*—Note the solemn imprecations with which Adriana and Luciana seek to fortify their story.

212-13. *Ne'er may I look.....simple truth*—In other words, may I never live unless this story is true !

214. *They are.....forsworn*—Both of them are swearing falsely. (Spoken aside.)

215. *In this*—so far as this particular charge is concerned. *Justly chargeth*—is right in his accusation against them.

216. *I am advised*—i.e. I am speaking with reason and deliberation.

217. *Disturbed.....wine*—fuddled with drink.

218. *Heady rash etc.*—speaking impetuously under the influence of head-strong anger.

219. *My wrongs.....mad*—my injury might have goaded to madness even a wiser person than myself.

217-219. *I am advised.....wiser mad*—**N.B.** The idea is this : The wrongs that I have suffered are enough to drive one mad ; and yet I am calm and deliberate in this that I state.

221. *Were he not.....packed with her*—if he had not entered upon a conspiracy with her.

222. *Could witness*—could bear testimony to the truth of my story.

228. *That gentleman*—referring to the merchant to whom Angelo was indebted.

229. *There did.....swear me down*—There he quite outfaced me (quite put me out of countenance) by swearing a false story to the effect that etc.

232. *With an officer*—with the help of an officer of the jail.

233. *My peasant*—meaning his bondsman, Dromio.

235. *Bespoke*—here meaning spoke to. *Fairly*—with courteous words.

238. *Rabble more.....confederates*—a vile crowd of her allies.

241. *A mere anatomy*—i. e. a mere skeleton, a person skin and bone. *mountebank*—quack.

*A mere anatomy etc.*—Notice how the extreme leanness of the good doctor is harped upon by Shakespeare at almost disproportionate length. In fact, it has been suggested that the character of Pinch was devised to suit an extremely lean actor who was a member of Shakespeare's company.

242. *I threadbare*—ragged, poverty-stricken.

243. *Sharp-looking wretch*—a man emaciated with the pinch of hunger.

244. *A living-dead man*—a walking corpse. *Pernicious*—mischievous, injurious.

245. *Took on him as a conjurer*—assumed the part of a witch-doctor.

247. *With no face.....outfacing me*—seeking to outface me with that lean no-face of his. (He is so much of a skeleton that his face is properly no face at all; and yet, with this no-face of his, he wanted to stare me out of countenance.)

*Dankish*—moist, damp.

*Vault*—cellar.

252. *Gnawing...sunder*—cutting asunder with my teeth the rope with which I was bound.

257. *Thus far.....with him*—thus far I can bear out this story.

262. *I'll be sworn*—I can take my oath in support of what I am going to say.

264. *Forswore it*—denied having received it.

265. *Thereupon*—viz. when he acknowledged having received the chain after having impudently denied it before.

271. *This is...withal*—this, viz. the charge which you bring against me.

272. *An intricate impeach*—a tangled and intricate affair. (*Impeach* properly means impeachment, accusation; and evidently the Duke is referring to the cross charges which the different parties were bringing against each other.)

273. *You all have...cup*—you have been all bewitched; you have all drunk off the magic potion which Circe used to give her victims. (Circe, in classical mythology, was a witch who lived in the island of Ænand who had the power of transforming her victims into beasts by means of her magic devices.)

274. *If here you housed him*—if you locked him up here; if you found him taking refuge in this house.

*Here he would have been*—because there is no other means of egress from this house.

275. *Coldly*—i.e. coolly; rationally, deliberately.

276. *You say he dined at home*—you, referring to Adriana and Luciana.

277. *Sirrah etc.*—addressing Dromio of Ephesus.

*What say you?*—What is your evidence? What have you got to say upon this part of the story?

278. *He dined with her there etc.*—N.B. The student will notice how the accounts given by the different parties, while agreeing in certain particulars, differ materially in others. Thus Adriana is confirmed by the goldsmith in so far as they both declare that Antipholus had taken shelter within the Abbey, but Adriana is contradicted by the goldsmith as regards whether she had dined with her husband or not.

283. *Is strange*—meaning that these contradictory accounts could not all be true at the same time.

284. *Mated*—amazed, confounded.

285. *Vouchsafe me*—allow me, grant me permission.

286. *I see a friend*—referring to Ant. E. whom he mistakes for Ant. S. though both are equally his children.

288. *Freely*—frankly, without hindrance.

291. *I was his bondman*—meaning that he was bound in the same chain with his master. (For the pun, see Paraphrase as well as Appendix.)

292. *Gnawed.....cords*—cut asunder my bonds by biting through them.

295. *Ourselves...by you*—referring to the fact that *Ægeon* was bound and therefore reminded *Dromio* of their own bound condition a little while before.

297. *You are not Pinch's patient*—Mark the assumed innocence of *Dromio's* manner. 'I hope you are not mad as we were supposed to be.'

*Not Pinch's patient*—not a mad man and thus requiring the attention of *Pinch*.

298. *Why look you strange on me*—why do you look upon me as if I were a stranger?

301. *Careful hours*—hours spent in anxiety.

*Deformed hand*—deforming hand.

*Time's deformed hand*—time which has the effect of devastating the human features.

301-302. *Careful.....in my face*—**Expl.** My face must have been strangely altered by the life of anxiety that I have led and by the wasteful effect of time.

302. *Defeatures*—disfigurement.

303. *But tell me yet.....voice*—**Expl.** But though you may not recognise my features, can't you recognise me in my voice?

310. *You are now bound to believe him*—Note the pun in *bound*: (1) obliged; (2) physically bound, viz. with that rope.

311. *Extremity*—cruelty, pitiless rigour.



*O time's extremity*—Alas for the relentless effects of time !

312. *Tongue*—voice.

*Crack'd and split*—rendered hoarse and unmusical

314. *My feeble.....cares*—my voice which has been untuned ( rendered unmusical ) by my life of anxiety. ( Notice that *untuned* is a transferred epithet, for it is the key that is untuned and not the cares.)

*My feeble key etc.*—my voice which is the feeble key with which to express my cares. (The voice is here metaphorically compared to the key of a musical instrument.

315. *Grained*—lined, furrowed.

*This grained face*—my face which is scarred with suffering.

316. *Sap consuming winter*—old age which withers the vigour of life even as winter consumes the sap of trees.

*Winter's drizzled snow*—referring to the venerable white hair of old age.

317. *The conduits of my blood*—the channels through which the blood flows.

*All the conduits.....frozen up*—though the spring of life within me seems to have become congealed and frozen up

318. *My night of life*—the decaying period of my life.

319. *My wasting lump*—referring to his eyes which have grown dim with age.

315-322. *Though now...Antiaphous*—**Expl.** No doubt age has laid its heavy and paralysing hand upon me : my face is covered with the snow-white hair of old age and the spring of life seems to be frozen up within me ; yet, even in this decay and desolation of age, I have still some feeble glimmering of sense and my ears have not altogether turned deaf. And I am assured by all these witnesses, viz. by my eyes and ears.

319. *Some fading glimmer*—some feeble power of sight.

330. *A little use to hear*—some slight capacity for hearing.

318-330. *Yet hath my night of life.....to hear*—**Expl.** No doubt my vital powers are all on the wane : yet I have not quite lost my memory, my eyes also still possess some power of sight, and my ears still retain some little capacity for hearing.

321. *All these old witness*—viz. such remnants of memory, sight and hearing as I still possess.

324. *But seven years since*—only seven years ago. .

326. *Thou shamest*—you feel ashamed.

*To acknowledge.....misery*—to acknowledge 'one in my present wretched condition.

328. *Can witness with me*—can bear testimony to my account.

233. *Make thee dote*—have made you foolish.

334. *Behold a man much wronged*—pointing of course to her proteges, Ant. S and Dromio S.

336. *Is genius to the other*—seems to be the very spirit and apparition of the other.

*One of these men*—referring to the two Antipholuses.

337. *Of these*—referring to the two Dromios.

338. *Who decipherers them*—who can probe their mystery,

343. *I will lose his bonds*—I will be the means of procuring his liberty.

333-334. *I will lose...liberty*—**Expl.** I will help him to recover his freedom and when he escapes I shall regain a husband in him.

347. *At a burden*—at one birth.

352. *The fatal raft*—that unlucky, hapless raft ; so called because it was the means of separating them all.

359. *This fortune*—viz. my present position as Abbess.

360. *Morning story*—referring to the story given by Ægeon in the morning.

*Here begins...right*—This quite agrees with the starting-point of the story which he narrated to us in the morning.

362. *One in semblance*—identical in form and image.

363. *Her urging...at sea*—her mention of the fact of the shipwreck.

366. *Antipholus...Corinth first*—The student will notice that the duke, though quite familiar with Antipholus E. falls into the same mistake as the rest and addresses this question to Ant. S.

379. *What I told you then*—viz. the love which I then professed for you and the proposal of marriage which I made to you. *Leisure*—opportunity. *To make good*—to fulfil.

391. *We still...man*—We were always coming, not across our own servants but the servants of the other. (In other words, I was always meeting Dromio. E. and you were always meeting Dro. S.)

392. *I was taken for him*—meaning that Ant. S. was taken for Ant. E.

393. *These ducats*—referring to the money which had been brought to serve his bail and which was now with Ant. S.

395. *It shall not need*—The money will not be required.

*Hath his life*—i. e. without the necessity of having to pay any fine.

396. *That diamond*—referring to the courtesan's ring.

397. *My good cheer*—the kind entertainment which you provided for me.

398. *Vouchsafe*—condescend. "

400. *And hear...fortunes*—and hear in full detail the story of all our fortunes.

402. *This sympathised one day's error*—this chapter of errors in which every body has shared.

404. *We shall make full satisfaction*—Expl. You seem to have been all involved, one way or other, in the errors which naturally arose from the confusion of identity between our children and their attendants. But come and listen to the story of our adventures; and that may compensate for all your sufferings.

*Make full satisfaction*—viz. by narrating the strange story of our lives and trials.

405. *Have I...travail*—I have spent wholly in suffering.

406. *Gone in travail of you*—gone burdened with a load of anxiety for you.

405 406. *Thirty-three years...sons*—For thirty-three years I have spent a life of suffering—thinking constantly of you my children.

406. *My heavy burthen...delivered*—I was never relieved of this heavy weight of grief.

409. *The calendars of their nativity*—you who are the exact remembrancers of their date of birth. (Because you also were born on the same day with them).

410. *'Gossips' feast*—properly meaning, a baptismal or christening feast. (This meeting was in one sense a sort of rebirth for the whole family, and hence it is described as a gossips' feast.)

*Joy with me*—enjoy with me.

410-11. *And joy...festivity*—you will rejoice over so much festivity coming after such a long period of grief. (The folio reading was *nativity*, in place of *festivity*.)

412. *I will gossip at this feast*—I will take my full share in this feast as if I were one of the gossips myself. (The word gossip, *God sib*, 'kindered in God' originally meant the god-parents at one's baptism.)

413. *Shall I fetch your stuff*—Of course Dromio S wanted to address his own master Ant. S. but he addresses the other Ant. by mistake.

414. *Embarked*—carried on board.

415. *Lay at host*—were deposited.

417. *anon*—afterwards.

420. *Kitchen'd me*—entertained me, fed me well.  
*For you*—by mistaking me for you.

421. *Sister*—meaning, sister-in-law.

422. *My glass*—looking-glass, mirror.

423. *Sweet-faced youth*—a young man with a kindly, amiable face

424. *To see their' gossiping*—to be present at their festivity.

425. *Not I sir*—meaning, not that he will not go but that he will not go in first.

426. *That's a question*—a point in dispute.  
*Try it*—decide it.

427. *Draw cuts*—i. e. draw lots. (The primitive form of drawing lots was by holding in the hand a few uneven

pieces of straw, and then the question was decided by somebody pulling the longer or shorter as the case might be).

*We will draw cuts for the senior*—In other words, we shall decide the question of our comparative seniority by drawing lots.

*Till then*—i. e. till the question is decided.

428. *Nay then thus*—The two brothers here take each other by the hand and prambulate the stage side by side.

## APPENDIX TO NOTES.

### A. PUNS, QUIBBLES AND CONCEITS.

All these terms are loosely used to indicate some juggling with words—some clever play upon the form, sound or sense of words which was a favourite pastime with Elizabethan writers.

1. A *pun* or *quibble* arises—

- (a) When the same word is used to convey a double sense\*. \*
- (b) When a play is intended upon two words or expressions similar in form but different in meaning.†
- (c) When a word suggests an allied word—similar in form or in general sense but applied with a very different meaning.‡
- (d) when a word suggests its sharp antithesis by contrast. (See No. 4 below).

2. A *conceit*, on the other hand, is an idea quaintly and fancifully expressed. A typical example will be found in III. 2. 'Spread over the silver weaves thy golden hair etc.'

### B. LIST OF PUNS AND QUIBBLES IN THE ERRORS.

- ✓ 1. *The clock hath stricken twelve upon the bell ;  
My mistress hath made it one upon my cheek.—*

Here the pun is more implied than expressed. The clock has struck 12 ; but my mistress has struck one—viz. given me a blow upon my cheek.

\* For illustration of this, see No. 9 in the following list.

† See no. 2 and 3 in the list.

‡ See no. 5.

2. I from.....*post*.

If I return.....*post* indeed : (I. 2. 63-64).

3. Where is the thousand *marks* ?

*Dro.* I have some *marks* of yours upon my cheek  
(I. 2. 81-82)

4. *Dro. E.* For Gods' sake, hold your *hands*.

Nay, an you will not I will take to my *heels*.  
(I. 2. 93-94)

This is a quibble—*hands* naturally suggesting *heels*.  
Either you hold your hands (cease from beating) or I take to my heels (i. e. run away.)

5. *Adr.* Say is your master *at hand* ?

*Dro. E.*—Nay, he is *at two hands* with me.  
(II. 1. 44-45)

6. *Luciana*—Spake he so *doubtfully* ?

*Dro. E.*—Nay, he struck so *plainly* (II. 1. 50-51)

An obvious quibble—*doubtfully* being contrasted with *plainly*. Luciana asks 'were his words very obscure ?' Dromio's quip is prompt—'Nay his blows were quite plain.'

7. Too unruly *deer* he break's the pale (II. 1. 100)

8. *Dro. S.* Hold, sir, for God's sake !

Now your *jest* is *earnest* :

Upon what bargain do you give it me ? (II. 2. 24-25)

Here there is a pun upon the double sense of *earnest*—meaning (1) serious and (2) earnest money—something paid in advance by way of concluding a bargain.

9. *Sconce* call you it ? (II. 2. 35)

Note that the word *sconce* is used not in a double but a triple sense as meaning (1) a small, round fortress ; (2) the head ; and (3) a helmet for the head.

10. *Ant. S.*—Then it will be dry (II. 2. 58)

The quibble is upon '*dry* basting' and '*dry* beating'—the latter meaning 'beating unaccompanied by bloodshed'.

11. Dr. S.—'A rule as *plain* as the *plain* bald head.'  
(II. 2. 68)

The first *plain* means clear, manifest; the second *plain* means 'smooth, well polished' as in the case of a bald head.

12. Fine and recovery—(II. 2. 73)

For a full explanation of the conceit, see *paraphrase* and *notes*.

13. *Ant. E.* 'There's something in the wind' (III. 1.76)

Antipholus uses the expression in its usual, metaphorical sense meaning—'There is something brewing, there is something going to happen'. But Dromio wilfully takes the words in their literal sense and says! "You would have more reason to say that there was something in the wind (that the wind was shrewd and biting) if your garments had been thin."

14. *Dro E.* A man may 'break &c.?' (III. 1. 82)

See *Notes*.

15. *Ant. S.*—Let love, being light etc. (III. 2. 52)

There is a glance at the double sense of light, meaning—(1) wanton, sportive as well as (2) light as distinguished from heavy. [In explaining this obscure expression, the student will bear the following point in mind. 'Light things are difficult to be drowned; and so Love, being light, would be difficult to be drowned. But if she (Luciana) sink, then Love and Life—all might perish for aught that Antipholus cared']

16. 'Not mad but mated, (III. 2. 54)

" *Mated*—(1) Confounded;

(2) provided with a partner.

17. Besides myself (III. 2. 77)

See *Notes*.

18. *Dro. S.*—'I have but *lean luck...fat marriage*.  
(III. 2. 88-90)

See *Notes*.

19. 'Nell.....quarters (III. 2. 105)

See next line.

20. Like a globe.....in her. (III. 2. 110-111).



See Notes.

21. 'Her forehead armed and reverted &c.' (III. 2. 119)

See Notes.

22. A back-friend, a shoulder-clapper.....poor souls to hell.' (IV. 2. 41-44)

For the whole passage which just bristles with puns, see *paraphrase* and *notes*.

23. 'On a *band*' (IV. 2. 53)

Adriana uses *band* in the sense of a *bond*, i. e. a mortgage or some other deed of loan; but Dromio S. takes it in the sense of *bond* or *rope*.

24. 'Gives them a bob and rests them!' (IV. 3. 22-23)

The proper meaning is 'gives them a tap on the shoulder and arrests them': but it may also mean gives them a shilling and thus enables them to rest.'

25. 'Gives them suits of durance.' (IV. 3. 23-24)

(1) Puts them in jail—in *durance vile*.

(2) Gives them suits which will endure, suits of leather.

26. 'The sergeant of the *band*.....*band*' (IV. 3. 27-28)  
For this further pun upon *band*, see *notes*.

27. 'Expedition.....delay' (IV. 3. 34-35)

28. 'The devil's *dam*.....God *damn* me.' (IV. 3. 51-53)

See Notes.

29. 'Feel your pulse.....feel your ear.' (IV. 4. 46-47)

30. 'I am here *entered in bond* for you' (IV. 1. 120)

(1) The actual meaning is 'Here am I—put in chains (bonds) for your sake.'

(2) But there is a glance at the second possible sense of the passage. Here am I, made to stand security on your behalf.'

31. *Ægeon*—Your *bondman* Dromio. (Bondman-slave.)  
*Dro E.* 'Within this hour I was his *bondman*, sir.'  
(Bondman-tied in the same bond or rope with him.) (V. 1. 290-91)

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Q. 1. *What is the available evidence for determining the date of Shakespeare's plays?*

This evidence may be considered as falling under the following main heads.

(1) If the play was published in Shakespeare's life-time, its name would be entered in the Stationers' Register of Copy rights—thus giving the date of publication.

(But the student must always remember that the plays published during the poet's life-time were never printed under the poet's supervision or authority: they were in every case pirated editions of the stage-version of the plays and as such corrupt and unreliable. These pirated versions, published during the poet's life-time, are known as the *quartos*.)

(2) In September 1598, Francis Meres, Professor of Rhetorics at Oxford, published a book named *Palladis Tamia* or *Wit's Treasure*, in which after a complimentary reference to Shakespeare (comparing him with Plautus and Seneca for comedy and tragedy respectively) a list is given of some of Shakespeare's plays. The list (which by no means exhaustive) makes mention of the following plays: *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Errors*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Love's Labour's Won*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Richard II.* *Henry IV.*, *King Lear*, *Titus Andronicus*, *Romeo and Juliet*.

Thus so far as these plays are concerned we may be perfectly certain that they were in existence before 1598.

(3) Then, occasionally, we get reference to the plays (as regards their first or subsequent performances) in works of contemporary literature or in the accounts of eye-witnesses. Thus, there is a reference to the performance of *Macbeth* in Dr. Simon Forman's diary, and to the performance of *Twelfth Night* in the diary of one John Manningham, a barrister. These also help in fixing the inferior limit of the plays—i. e. the date before which they must have been written.

(4) Then, in the plays themselves, we sometimes get references to historical incidents of known dates—as for instance to the Irish Expedition of Essex which helps us in fixing the date of *Henry V.*

(5) Lastly, there is the style and metrical structure of the plays—a less tangible but not less reliable form of evidence for ascertaining the *period* to which a play may belong.

**Q. 2.** Discuss the date of the *Comedy of Errors* with reference to the accepted principles of evidence.

(See introduction, pp. xix, xx.)

(1) Mention in Meres' *Palladis Tamia* makes it absolutely certain that the play was in existence before 1598.

(2) The account given in the *Gesta Grayorum* (which in all human likelihood refers to the *Comedy of Errors*) makes it very probable that the play was in existence before 1594.

(3) This probability is clinched and the date of the play shifted further back by internal evidence—viz. reference to the civil war in France (III. 2. 120) which makes it extremely likely that the play was written some time between 1589-93.

(4) Another bit of internal evidence—viz. possible reference to the invasion of the Armada (III. 2. 131)—fixes the date as near 1589 as is possible.

**Q. 3.** From what source did Shakespeare mainly derive the materials of his play?

See Introduction, pp. xxi—xxii.—(1) For the story of the play (the errors which make up the kernel of the comedy) Shakespeare was indebted to the *Mænæchmi* of Plautus;—and for one particular incident of the play to the *Amphytrion* of the same author.

(2) But if Shakespeare was indebted to Plautus for his story—for the management of the story, he was indebted in a large measure to his older contemporary, Lyly. Thus from Lyly he derived (1) the air of fantastic unreality which pervades the story, as well as (2) that motive of confusions and cross-purposes which plays such a considerable part not simply in the *Errors* but also in *Love's Labour's Lost* and *Two Gentlemen of Verona*.

**Q. 4.** Discuss in detail the question of the relation between the *Comedy of Errors* and Plautus's *Mænæchmi*. (b) Shew in what respects Shakespeare departed from the story of Plautus, and how far these departures are an improvement upon the original.

(See Introduction—pp. xl and xli.)—The two questions may best be dealt with together.—

The kernel of the play consists in a series of 'errors' proceeding from a confusion of identity between two pairs

of twins. So far as this is concerned Shakespeare was wholly indebted to Plautus ; but his departures from Plautus are perhaps even more significant than his resemblances to his original.

It has been said of Plautus that he was a master of plot-construction and that his dramas are like 'a page torn from the book of life.' But both as regards plot-construction and freshness of delineation, Shakespeare shows himself as far superior to Plautus.

Thus, so far as the plot is concerned, he heightens both the comedy and the interest of the drama by the introduction of the two Dromios as foils to the two Antipholuses.

Again, Plautus's comic drama of mistaken identity is almost in the nature of a farce ; he leaves it standing by itself and dependent for effect wholly upon the comic element. But Shakespeare imparts a romantic character to the drama—first by the introduction of a pretty piece of love-making, and secondly (and still more) by placing his story against a two-fold background—the back-ground of the quarrel between the Syracusans and Ephesians, and the pathetic back-ground of the earlier story of Ægeon's life.

By itself, the story of the confusion between the two pairs of twins would have been nothing more than sheer farce ; but taken in connection with the story Ægeon's separation from his family and his age-long wanderings in quest of his wife and children, it is a genuine human document with a strong appeal to our emotion.

Q. 5. *Give a brief critical estimate of the play.*

(See introduction, pp. xxxvi, xxxvii.)

The play certainly cannot be regarded as one of Shakespeare's master-pieces : it has nothing of that energy of characterizations or insight into the depths of passion which is the glory of Shakespeare's dramatic work. But all the same, it has its own special points of interest and excellence

- (1) Thus it is a marvel of ingenious plot-construction—a point which Shakespeare came rather to neglect in his later plays.
- (2) Note also the infinite variety of emotional effect which the play offers to us. By this time Shakespeare had come to be perfectly familiar with the needs and tastes of his audience. He knew that

people wanted in their stage-plays a certain amount of fun, a certain amount of sentimental love-making, and a certain dash of not-too-acute sorrow : and here, in the *Comedy of Errors* we have a medley of all these elements.

- (3) Lastly, by introducing the story of Aegeon and his tragic mishaps, the author imparts a romantic character to a play which otherwise would have been sheer farce.

**Q. 6.** *What evidence is there to show that the Comedy of Errors is one of Shakespeare's early plays?*

(See Introduction, pp. xli and xlii.)

**Q. 7.** *Analyse the construction of the play, with special reference to what has been called the double or under-plot.*

We get the double or under-plot when there is a story within a story. Thus here we first get the story of the merchant Aegeon, a Syracusan who has come to Ephesus not knowing of the fatal feud between the Syracusans and the Ephesians, and who, in consequence of this unlucky landing, is sentenced to death. But the pathetic narrative of his earlier life-history moves the Duke's compassion, and the merchant is respited till sun-set—to find if he could not procure enough money to ransom his life.

The above, we may say, is the outer case or ring of the story. But against it—enveloped within it so to say—is the story of the two pairs of twins and the strange errors that arise from a natural confusion between their identity.—This interweaving of one story within another has been differently expressed by speaking of *central action* and *enveloping action*.

**N.B.** Note also that in the present play we have not one enveloping action but two stages or rings of such action. We may approach the thing in this way :

- (1) First, and forming the inner core of the play, we have the story of the two Antipholuses and the two Dromios.
- (2) Next, and as the first ring of enveloping action, we have the pathetic narrative of Aegeon's early mishaps—his shipwreck and the consequent separation of his family.
- (3) Lastly, and as the outer shell of the whole drama, we have the story of Aegeon's unwitting

offence in having come to Ephesus and his consequent penalty of fine or death.

**Q. 8.** *What references to contemporary London-life do we find in the play?*

(See *Introduction*, pp. xxxviii, xl to which add the reference to the hours of meal in Elizabethan England and noted in this drama).

(1) Thus dinner was evidently a mid-day meal. Shortly after 12. o'clock (I. 2. 45) Dromio E. is sent hot-foot to fetch his master to dinner; and at 2 o'clock (II. 1. 3) we are told that he is very late for dinner.

(2) And if dinner was a midday meal, supper was evidently taken at 5 o'clock. This we gather from two references. In III. 2. 169-70, the goldsmith tells Dromio that he would visit him 'soon' 'at supper-time' and get from him the price of the chain. And in IV. 1. 10, he tells his creditor that he would receive the price of the chain at 5 o'clock.

**Q. 9.** *What inferences may we draw from the various legal expressions and references to legal procedure in the Comedy of Errors?*

(A very full list of these legal references has been given in the *Introduction*, pp. XLIV, XLV to which add Shakespeare's evident familiarity with a summary process by which debtors could be sent to jail even before judgment was delivered.)

One inference is quite plain from this abundant use of legal expressions—viz. that Shakespeare had a fair working familiarity with law-terms and legal processes. But are we justified in going further? Can we say that Shakespeare's facile use of law-terms indicates an 'inside familiarity with legal matters'—a familiarity which could not have been obtained except from a lawyer's office—say, as apprentice or clerk to an attorney? Cruel though the charge may sound (for what can be worse than for a great poet to have been bound as an attorney's apprentice?) this position has been seriously maintained by some eminent scholars—Malone in a former generation and Henry Cunningham in his edition of the *Comedy of Errors* in the Arden Shakespeare series.

But as against this is the other view that Shakespeare's

knowledge of the law is such as any ordinary man of affairs with a quick and observant mind could easily pick up in his intercourse with all sorts and conditions of men. Besides, Shakespeare's father had been a very litigious person, and the poet—as his father's eldest son—naturally picked up a more than ordinary acquaintance with legal affairs. Again, the avalanche of epithets which the younger Dromio pours out in describing the officer of the Counter is significant—not as proving Shakespeare's knowledge of law but as indicating that the great poet—at some period or other in his career—might have had an unpleasant experience of the inside of a debtors' prison.

✓ Q. 10. *By what argument is it sought to be proved that Shakespeare consulted an English Translation of the *Maenaechni* and not the Latin original?*

The whole question turns upon the possible extent of Shakespeare's knowledge of Latin. (See *Introduction*. pp. XLII, XLII). From the casual character of Shakespeare's early education, and from the fact that he was compelled to cast about for his livelihood at a very early period of his life, it can be very reasonably contended that the poet's knowledge of Latin could not have been extensive or deep. No doubt he knew the tongue, and no doubt also that he could have stumbled his way through books written in Latin: but that was about all. And as against this insufficient mastery over Latin, we must remember the quickness and mobility of Shakespeare's genius and the unusual rapidity with which he wrote—a fact which is clear from contemporary evidence no less than from the character of the writing itself. Under these circumstances, is it likely that Shakespeare would have saddled himself with the unnecessary trouble of stumbling wearily through the Latin original, when a decent translation was easy and available?

Besides, the things does not rest upon probability alone. If we compare the language of Shakespeare's Comedy with Warner's translation of the *Maenaechni*, we at once become aware of many striking similarities of expression; and these also favour the supposition that Shakespeare consulted an English translation of Plautus rather than go to the Latin original.

**Q. 11.** *Enumerate the principal errors in the Comedy of Errors.*

[We shall recapitulate here not all the individual errors—for which the reader will consult the sketch given in the Introduction—but the main sources of these errors.]

1. The first source of error was with regard to the invitation to dinner. The wife of Antipholus of Ephesus was waiting dinner for her husband and sent the elder Dromio to fetch his master. But Dromio took the younger Antipholus for his master and spoke to him in that belief. Of course, the younger Antipholus could not understand this and at first sent Dromio away. But when Adriana herself came with the slave, he could not persist in the denial; and, though obviously bewildered, he yet followed her to her house.

2. The second series of errors arose about a gold chain. Antipholus of Ephesus had ordered a chain from a goldsmith. The goldsmith took his brother for him and thrust the chain upon Antipholus of Syracuse. Shortly after this, the goldsmith was pressed for debt by a creditor to whom he owed money. While the two were discussing the subject, Antipholus of Ephesus came upon the scene. The goldsmith, thinking that this was the man to whom he had given the chain, demanded the price of the chain from him. But of course Antipholus of Ephesus knew nothing of the matter and naturally refused payment. He was then arrested at the complaint of the goldsmith and taken to prison.

3. The third mistake was about a gold ring. We have seen that the younger Antipholus went to dinner with Adriana. In the meantime, the elder Antipholus—the real husband, of Adriana—came to the house, but to his great astonishment was refused admittance. He then went away in anger to another woman, a courtesan, and promised to give her a gold chain; and in return for this, she gave him a gold ring at once. By and by, the younger Antipholus chanced to come across the woman, and the woman, taking him for his brother, demanded the chain from him. Of course, Antipholus of Syracuse knew nothing of the chain and refused the request point-blank. The woman at this went to Adriana and told her that her husband had gone mad. Adriana believed this; and with the help of a conjurer and several other persons rescued Antipholus as he was being taken to prison,



and afterwards put him in chains and had him confined in his room for a mad man.

**Q. 12.** *What are the rules of unity? Shew how then they have been observed in the Comedy of Errors.*

For the rules themselves, see *Appendix to the Notes*. The unities of time and place have been strictly observed in this drama—in as much as the action is confined to only one place, viz. the city of Ephesus, while it is comprised within the course of one day from sunrise to sunset. About the *unity of action*, however, there is more doubt. No doubt the motive of the play is one, viz. confusion of identity between two pairs of twins and the diverting errors that arise from this confusion. But Shakespeare like the Romantic dramatists generally, was not content with only one centre of interest for his play. And so, beside the comic central motive, we have also the underlying tragic implication of Aegeon's possible fate. No doubt the tragedy is averted: but the possibility of the tragedy is always there; and this—though it heightens the interest of the play—certainly does not preserve its unity of action.

**Q. 13.** *Explain the puns in the following passages.*

(a) I from my mistress come to you in post; If I return I shall be post indeed.

(b) *Adr.* Back, slave, or I will break thy pate across.  
*Dro. E.* And he will bless that cross with other greeting.

(c) *Dro. S.* Hold, sir, for god's sake! now your jest is earnest: upon what bargain do you give it me?

(d) *Dro. S.* Sconce, call you it? So you would leave off battering, I had rather have it a head.

(e) *Ant. E.* There is something in the wind, that we can not get in.

*Dro. E.* You would say so master, if your garments were thin.

(f) *Dro. S.* I have but lean luck in match and yet is she a wonderous fat marriage.

(The play is upon *lean* and *fat*. 'It is a fat marriage because the bride is so fat; and yet Dromio's luck in marriage is lean, because he has to take such an ugly woman as wife.'))

(g) *Ant. E.* I sent thee for a rope.

*Dro. S.* You sent me for a rope's end as soon.

(h) *Adr.* Tell me, was he arrested on a bond?

*Dro. S.* Not on a bond but on a stronger thing, a chain, a chain!

(i) *Dro. E.* Master, I am entered here in bond for you.

Q. 14. Explain fully the following passages and expressions, noting any variation in reading that you may consider necessary.

[Generally speaking, pass students need not trouble themselves with the question of various readings—except in a few important instances, as for instance in the line.

*'To seek thy life thy benificent help'* (I. 1. 153)

Here the folio reading is *'help...help'* which is obviously corrupt; and so the question of a correct reading becomes of some importance in a passage like this].

(a) *Many a man would take you at your word,*

*And go indeed having so good a mean.* (I. 2. 17-18)

(b) *First Mer.* Sir, I commend you to your own content.

*Ant. S.* He that commends me to mine own content  
Commends me to the thing I cannot get.

(I. 2. 32-34.)

(c) *I to the world am like a drop of water,*.....

*In quest of them, unhappy, lose myself.*

(I. 2. 35-40)

(The apparent meaning is this: The drop, seeking to find its fellow-drop in the vast-gulfs of the ocean, loses itself. So I, seeking to find my brother, have got lost and confounded in spirit.—But it is possible also that Antipholus is referring to 'losing' himself in the crowded streets of the city. In that case, the meaning would be: 'The drop in seeking to find its fellow-drop gets lost in the infinite mass of the sea. So I, an unhappy human unit, seeking to find my brother, will lose myself among the other human units of this crowded city'.)

(d) *Headstrong liberty is lashed with woe.* (II. 1. 15)

(e) *This fool-begged patience in thee will be left.* (II. 1. 41.)

(f) *My master is.....at two hands with me, and that my two ears can witness.* (II. 1. 45-46.)

(g) *Two unruly deer.* (II. 1. 100.)

(h) *Dro S. There's no time for a man to recover his hair that grows bald by nature.*

*Ant. S. May he not do it by fine and recovery?* (II. 2. 71-73.)

(i) *Dro. A., A crow without a feather? Master, mean you so:*

*For a fish without a fin, there's a fowl without a feather.* (III. 1. 88-89.)

(j) *Slander lives upon succession.*

*For ever housed where it gets possession.* (III. 1. 112-113.)

(k) *In despite of wrath, mean to be marry.* (III. 1. 115.)

(Mr. Scrimgeour retains the folio reading, viz. of 'mirth for 'wrath' but gives it an interpretation which is absolutely unwarranted.—Obviously, the meaning of the passage is this: 'My natural tendency is to be angry. But to show my contempt of wrath—to show that Adriana is not even deserving of wrath—I mean to be merry.') (III. 1. 115.)

(l) *Let love, being light, be drowned if she sink.* (III. 2. 52.)

(m) *This touches me in reputation* (IV. 1. 71.)

(n) *A devil in an everlasting garment, a back friend-shoulder-clapper* (IV. 2. 37-41.)

(o) *Conceit my comfort and my injury.* (IV. 2. 70.)

(p) *The picture of old Adam new-apparelled.* (IV. 3. 13.)

(q) *His word might bear my wealth at any time.* (V. 1. 8.)

(r) *She did betray me to my own reproof.* (V. 1. 92.)

(s) *Ægeon. Is not that your bondman Dromio?*

*Dro. E. Within this hour I was his bondman. Sir*

*Now am I Dromio, and his man unbound.* (V. 1. 291-93.)

(t) *Calendars of their nativity.* (V. 1. 409.)

(u) *Gossips' feast.* (V. 1. 414.)

Q. 15. *Note any errors or inconsistencies in the play.*

There are two such errors or inconsistencies.

(1) The first is about the respective seniority of the two Antipholus. In I, 80 (1) it is said that the mother took charge of the younger Antipholus, while at I. 126 and throughout the rest of the play, the younger is supposed to have been with the father.

(2) The second is in V, 1. 405. The abbess speaks of her '39 years' of travail in quest of her sons. Of course, this should be 25.

